













PAGAN RACES  
OF THE  
MALAY PENINSULA







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RELIGION.

PART III.





## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTH-CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

By far the most important and interesting contribution hitherto made to our knowledge of the birth-customs of the three wild races dealt with in these volumes, whether Negrito, Sakai, or Savage Malaysians, is contained in the remarks of H. Vaughan-Stevens upon the means by which (according to the Semang) the body of the living but unborn child is provided with a soul. The word "living" is used in order to distinguish between the "spirit of life" ("jiwa") and the soul ("sēmangat"), which latter (it may be helpful to say at the outset) is used throughout this book (as throughout *Malay Magic*) in the cultural sense of Tylor's definition (which agrees far more closely with our own mediæval ideas of the soul than with its modern conception as transfigured by the ideas of Christianity). Although Vaughan-Stevens' account still awaits corroboration from explorers among the Semang (and is therefore printed in small type), it is none the less eminently credible, for the idea of comparing the soul to a bird, or of identifying it in some way with a bird, is of world-wide distribution,<sup>1</sup> and is well known to the Malays, who call the soul the "pingai" bird, and in their magical

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<sup>1</sup> For references, see *Rev. de l'Hist. des Religions*, xxxvii. 385  
VOL. II

invocations address it with the word "kur," used in calling chickens. The Semang woman is said to carry about with her a bamboo receptacle, in which she keeps the soul-bird of her expected progeny; this bird is really the vehicle of her child's soul, and she is expected to eat it to enable the soul of her child to be developed. The whole of this part of the subject is fraught with great interest, and would reward the most careful investigation by future observers.

Among the Sakai a professional *sage-femme* is to be found, who enjoys certain special privileges, and is the owner of a species of medicine-hut to which any of the expectant mothers of the tribe may retire when their full time has come. Another point about the birth-customs of the Sakai is that a special water-receptacle of bamboo called "chit-nât," which is decorated with a special design, is employed in the purification of mother and child.

Finally, among the Jakun, or aboriginal Malaysans, we find the greatest development of the custom of "roasting" the new-made mother over a fire (an Indo-Chinese practice which is general among the Malays, by whom it is called "salei-an"), as well as a system of birth-taboos which regulate the diet and the movements of both parents.

#### I.—SEMANG.

Among the Semang of Kedah the mother was usually placed at birth in a sitting posture, and was then preferably treated with a decoction made from the root of a creeper called "chenlai," which had to be sought upon the loftiest mountain ranges; but in default of this, a potion was concocted from the leaves of the "lëngkuas" and *Citronella* or lemon

grass. The afterbirth ("uri") and appurtenances were buried in the leaf-shelter close to the family hearth.<sup>1</sup>

I may add that at birth a measurement is taken from the infant's navel along the umbilical cord to its knee, at which point the cord is severed with a sharpened sliver of *Eugeissona* or "bértam."

Both on the east and west coast the great majority of the names given to the children were of Malayán origin, and were taken from natural objects, especially from trees and plants, though they occasionally took the form of attributes appropriate to the individual, e.g. "Panjang," i.e. "Long."<sup>2</sup>

The following is the account given by Vaughan-Stevens of the Perak Semang:—

#### BIRTH AND THE NAME-TREE.<sup>3</sup>

Birth is usually an easy matter. An old and experienced woman assists the mother. A bamboo or young tree-stem is cut short at a height of about 1½ or 2 metres from the ground, and placed so as to lean diagonally either against the hut-roof or any other suitable object. A log of wood or thick segment of bamboo is then deposited at the foot of the sloping stem, so as to serve as a seat for the patient, who rests her back against the stem. There is no application of pressure or manipulation, only the *sage-femme* ("til-til-tāpā-i") presses the patient's hands a little behind her back flat on the ground.

When the child is born, it is received by the *sage-femme*, and a knife made from the blossom-stem of the bértam ("chin-beg" = *Eugeissona tristis*) palm is employed to sever the umbilical cord, at a distance of a "span's-breadth" ("tāpā") from the body. The child's name will have already been decided by the father, who takes it from some tree which stands near the prospective birth-place of the child. As soon as the child is born, this name is shouted aloud by the *sage-femme*, who then hands over the child to another woman, and buries the afterbirth, usually—and formerly always—underneath the birth-tree or name-tree<sup>4</sup> of the child. As soon as this has been done, the father cuts a series of notches in the tree, starting from the ground and terminating at the height of the breast.<sup>5</sup>

The mother generally rests for three days, but even after two days begins to move about again. No bandages, etc., are used.

The posture of the mother is said to be "imitated from that of Kari," and the sloping tree-stem is "the tree against which he leans." The cutting of the

<sup>1</sup> V. Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> "A more simple and natural mode of bestowing names cannot well be imagined than that adopted by the Semang. They are called after particular trees; that is, if a child is born under, or near a coconut or durian, or any particular tree, in the forest, it is named accordingly."

—Anderson, *J.I.A.* vol. iv. p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 112-113.

<sup>4</sup> The name-tree cannot be identical with the birth-tree, which is different for males and females (*ib.* 116), and contains the unborn souls; whereas the name is selected from any tree at will.

<sup>5</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 112.

notches is intended to signalise the arrival on earth of a new human being, since it is thus that Kari registers the souls that he has sent forth, by notching the tree against which he leans. These notches are called "tangkor."<sup>1</sup>

Trees thus "blazed" are never felled. Any species of tree may be a name-tree for a child of either sex. The Western Semang, who live in clearings where there are no big trees, take such names as "Pisang" (Banana), "K'ladi" (*Caladium* or yam), "Kuang" (an abbreviation of *Mengkua*), "Rambei," "Rambutan," "Durian," etc., for the most part Malayan fruit names, although they frequently also take the corresponding names in Semang. The Eastern Semang (Pangan) take only Semang (Menik) names, and in this respect have plenty of choice, as their dialect has a name for every species of tree in the forest.<sup>2</sup>

The child must not, in later life, injure any tree which belongs to the species of his tree. For him all such trees are taboo, and he must not even eat of their fruit, the only exception being when an expectant mother revisits her birth-tree.

Among the Eastern Semang (Pangan) it was an ancient custom for an expectant mother to visit the nearest tree belonging to the species of her own birth-tree, and hang it about with fragrant leaves and blossoms, if she happened to be able to reach its branches, or deposit them at the tree's foot, if the tree was too big for them to be suspended. This, however, was mere custom, and in no sense compulsory.

#### THE SOUL-BIRD.<sup>3</sup>

In depositing the flowers at the foot of the tree, she takes care that they are not laid upon the spot where the afterbirth had been buried. The reason for this (as given by the Eastern Semang or Pangan) is that the soul of the expected child, in the form of a bird, will recognise the tree by the aspect of this very spot, and will there wait until it is killed and eaten by the mother.

Even though the real birth-tree itself may be many miles distant, yet every tree of its species is regarded as identical with it. The bird, in which the child's soul is conveyed, always inhabits a tree of the species to which the birth-tree belongs; it flies from one tree (of the species) to another, following the as yet unborn body. The souls of first-born children are always young birds newly hatched, the offspring of the bird which contained the soul of the mother. These birds obtain the souls from Kari. If the woman does not eat the soul-bird during her accouchement, her child will either be still-born or will die shortly after birth. To explain bodily malformation the Semang declare that the bird "chim-iui" or "til-til-tāpā" must, when it was being killed, have fallen upon a kind of fungus called the "tigress'-milk' fungus"<sup>4</sup> (Mal. "susu harimau"), which is the young soul of a tiger which rests quietly in the earth until the tigress has cubs, when it springs up and is eaten by the tigress, who thus obtains the souls of her cubs.<sup>5</sup>

The souls in the "tigress'-milk fungus" ("susu harimau")<sup>6</sup> are always a pair, male and female, so that one fungus suffices.<sup>7</sup> If the bird ("chim-iui") falls upon one of these fungi the tiger-souls escape, and since they are in their natural state inimical to man, they remain so in the bird. Thus when the woman eats the soul-bird, the tiger-souls and the human soul battle together in the unborn body, which thus becomes crippled or dies outright. Yet even

<sup>1</sup> "Tangkor" is probably a cockneyfied spelling of "tangkok" = Mal. "takok" (notch).

<sup>2</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 113.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 113-117.

<sup>4</sup> According to Vaughan-Stevens it is a "mushroom," but it is in reality the "sclerotium of a fungus," *vide* Ridley, *s.v.*, which view is here followed.

<sup>5</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 114.

<sup>6</sup> "Susu harimau," in Malay = tigress' milk. In Semang = "napas-taiyo" or tiger-soul (V.-St.).

<sup>7</sup> According to the Sakai (Blandas) as well as the Semang (Menik) the tigress always produces a pair of cubs (V.-St.). The same notion is found among the Malays.

when the embryonic human body dies in consequence of a fight of this kind, the victory as between the souls nevertheless remains with the one that is human. The tiger-souls in these fungi are not the souls of tigers already deceased, but newly-developed souls derived from a stock which Kari has created and scattered abroad upon the earth like seeds.<sup>1</sup>

All creatures that are inimical to man obtain their souls from poisonous fungi, whereas harmless creatures obtain their souls from harmless fungi.

When an adult man (or a woman who is not pregnant) partakes of a poison-fungus, containing the soul of a harmful beast, the beast-soul attacks the human individual quite as violently as if the attack were made by a creature that was adult, but in the case of an expectant mother, the beast-soul attacks the soul of the un-born child because it is the weaker. If the soul-bird falls upon a poison-fungus, which contains a beast—the soul of some beast or reptile, other than that of a tiger—such as, for instance, that of a snake—the latter bites the body of the unborn child, but it is not certain whether the child will necessarily die or not. Some slight protection is afforded by the appropriate design upon the birth-bamboo carried by the mother, this design being capable of repelling such attacks, although during the birth a tiger-soul thus repulsed may revenge itself upon the mother. Hence in cases of difficult birth the Puttos were always called in to assist, since they were able, by means of special charms, to avert these attacks as well as the others.

Phosphorescent fungi, such as give light by night, contain the unborn souls of night-beasts, and give out light in order to show the female where to find the soul she is looking for. Many kinds of beasts have many young at a time, and for these whole groves of fungi shoot up when required.

The West Semang no longer believe in the soul-bird, and even employ the bird itself as food; but the East Semang (Pangan) only kill the bird on behalf of their women-folk. In addition, they believe that the souls of Malays, Chinese, and Siamese were obtained from another kind of birds corresponding to the physical peculiarities of these several races. Before they leave the presence of Kari the souls sit in the branches of a big tree behind his seat and there wait until he sends them away. What their shape is the Semang do not know; they only know that it does not resemble the human form, and that this latter is only attained in the body. After the death of their human embodiment the souls which possess a human shape can no longer return to Kari to pass into new bodies, but have then to wait in a different place. Since the soul never dies, the soul-birds themselves do not die until they have fulfilled their mission; nor can they be shot by mistake; the arrow will miss them, until their predestined slayer should happen to shoot at them.<sup>2</sup>

According to another tradition, the souls of fish are contained in riverside grasses and bushes, every species of fish having its corresponding species of plant. The same is the case with sea-beasts. Birds fly behind the mountains when the sun goes down and into the country of the Sen-oi; there they eat certain unknown fruits, and in this way obtain souls for their eggs. The only exceptions are the birds called "chim-iui" and "til-til-tāpā." These need no souls, since they themselves are human souls in the visible shape of birds. When they require life for their eggs, *i.e.* when they are ready to fetch more human souls, they eat the fruit of the man's or woman's birth-tree, as the case may be. When one of these birds dies a natural death, it is because of the death of the child in the womb, but opinions are divided as to what may be the fate of such an undeveloped soul. Some, however, think it returns to Kari, and becomes re-embodied in another bird, the eating of whose flesh brings twins to another Semang woman, just as if she had eaten the soul-bird with an egg.

Whenever an East Semang (Pangan) dies, his birth-tree dies soon after. If,

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens. iii. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 114.

however, the tree dies first, this is a sign that the owner's death will follow. Hence big and strong trees are selected as birth-trees. And when one Semang kills another, except in war, he avoids the other's birth-tree, for fear it will fall on him.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE BIRTH-BAMBOO.<sup>2</sup>

The birth-bamboo (as has already been said), is an internode, or hollow shaft of bamboo (minus the knots or "joints") which is covered with magical designs intended to serve as charms against sickness and nausea, and is carried by pregnant women, hidden under the girdle, in order to prevent any strange man from seeing it. The magical designs on it are incised by the husband, and an *ençante* woman without a birth-bamboo is regarded in much the same way as a woman in Europe would be who lacked a wedding-ring.

The patterns of the birth-bamboo represent the child in the mother's womb. They are described more fully in the chapter on "Decoration."

Within this receptacle (the birth-bamboo) the expectant mother keeps the bird, her eating which is believed to introduce the soul into her unborn child. The expression used by the Semang of Kelantan to describe a woman who has hope of offspring is "machi kawai," *i.e.* "she has eaten the bird."<sup>3</sup> The flesh of the bird in question, however, is not eaten all at once, but piecemeal, being kept in the birth-bamboo and replaced when eaten by one or two bones, until the child is born, when they are thrown away.

"Til-til-tāpā," the bird which brings male souls, is the smaller Argus-pheasant; that which brings female souls is called "chim-lui," [which probably stands for "chim yui," or the "bird that brings" (the soul)]. Twins arise from eating the soul-bird with an egg. In such a case there is only one birth-tree.<sup>4</sup>

The severance of the cord may be effected either by one of the women or by the child's father. It is performed upon a block of soft "jêlotong" ("juletong") wood called "potong pusat."<sup>5</sup>

No implement of iron may be used for the purpose, a bamboo knife called "sëmbilu"<sup>6</sup> being the instrument generally used, though knives called "tāpā" ("tappar")<sup>7</sup> are also manufactured (for this purpose exclusively) from the leaf-stem of the bërtam-palm. In former times a white (spiral) shell was employed.

The East Semang ("Pangan"), like the Sakai, sling their children from the bough of a tree, when they are working close by, but not when they are working at any great distance.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 116, 117.

<sup>2</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 115, 116. Cp. Grunwedel in *V. B. G. A.* xxiv. 466, 467.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "eat bird."

<sup>4</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 116.

<sup>5</sup> This is a Malay expression signifying "cut navel" (*i.e.* cut navel-string), which of course is a name describing the action, not the implement.

<sup>6</sup> According to Vaughan-Stevens "semilow" (*sic*) which is merely the Malay "sëmbilu," a "sliver" or "splinter," mis-spelt and slightly modified in course of borrowing.

<sup>7</sup> Bartels here remarks that in one

place Vaughan-Stevens described these knives as being made from the stem of the bërtam-palm, in another (as here) from the *Blatt-haut* or leaf-stem (midrib of the leaf). The latter is of course correct, the bërtam being, as Bartels rightly remarks, a stemless palm. He adds that the Semang call this palm "chin-beg," that Vaughan-Stevens had sent five specimens of the "tappai" (*v.* Fig. 6), and that they are narrow slivers sharpened at the point like a pen-knife, and measuring from 16.2 cm. to 19 cm. They are all of Semang origin. *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 190.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 201.

TEMBEH.<sup>1</sup>

The Tembeh (Temia or Tummiyo) in the intervals between the times for feeding them leave their children by themselves on the floor of their airy dwellings.

Very often, however, they deposit them in a hammock consisting of a stretched-out "sarong" (Malay = cloth skirt, or wrapper) and sling them up under a screen of leaves, which can be completely constructed in about twenty minutes. This is partly done to set the mother free for cooking and preparing meals, but more so because such a position makes it pleasanter and more comfortable for the child, who is besides much better protected from the attacks of land-leeches, ants, centipedes, and scorpions. It is therefore prompted by care for the child, and is not due to any carelessness or neglect. At night the child's swinging cradle is never (even among the Orang Laut) suspended from a tree, for fear of leopards.

According to Vaughan-Stevens (iii. 102) the average number of children born to a Tembeh cannot be put higher than two per man.

## II.—SAKAI.

A Sakai (Blandas) *sage-femme* is, as might be anticipated, more reluctant to give information about her art than even the magician, although the latter is far more secretive than the ordinary tribesman, the getting of information from whom is in itself a sufficiently hard task. The following account is from Vaughan-Stevens :<sup>2</sup>—

The *sage-femme's* house is easily recognisable, since it is invariably built on a level with the ground, whereas all the other houses of the tribe are raised from 4 ft. to 6 ft. (1.2 m. to 1.8 m.) above the soil.<sup>3</sup> If she has a husband still living (which very seldom happens), she has two huts, one of the ordinary type in which she and her husband live together, and the other which serves as her medicine-hut and which is invariably built upon the ground. No man may on any pretence enter her medicine-hut or even approach it too closely, and even in passing it he must do so at a little distance. Women, however, may enter it whenever they happen to be invited, but children again are forbidden to do so, for fear of their doing some mischief.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless these huts are not intended solely for the *sage-femme*, since they also serve as a special retreat for women at child-birth, and the latter are allowed to remain there for fourteen days after delivery. In the days when the Sakai were more numerous, these medicine-huts were much larger.

<sup>1</sup> Z. f. E. xxviii. 201.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 164-197.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 165. Various reasons were given to Vaughan-Stevens for this, e.g. (1) that the *sage-femme* was old and weak; (2) that when the hut was built on the ground, the demons ("hantu") could not insinuate themselves under the floor. More probably, however, it was so built

in order to distinguish it from other houses and so protect it from trespass. Vaughan-Stevens further remarks that the door (in this class of hut alone) was lower than the head of a grown-up person, and that the walls and roof were contracted in size and thick, to prevent men from seeing into it.

<sup>4</sup> Z. f. E. xxviii. 165.



The profession of the *sage-femme* was to some extent honoured by her being freed from taking any share in the work of the tribe, although she nevertheless obtained her full share of the produce. One of her duties consisted in taking care of children of the tribe in the absence of their mothers, for although none of the children might formerly venture to enter, their mothers would bring them into these huts whenever they had jungle-work before them and had a burden to carry upon their homeward journey.

If the settlement did not possess a hut of this kind, the children were often slung up above the ground to keep them out of mischief.<sup>1</sup>

The *sage-femme* was a person of little importance as compared with the magician, except when performing her official duties. Nevertheless, she shared with the magician the privilege of being allowed to put on the white points in the face-painting, it being held that any unprivileged person who did so would be killed by lightning.

Again, the midwives of the Sakai, Besisi, and Kenaboi tribes further had an identical face-painting which they were privileged to wear whilst discharging their functions, the pattern differing from the usual one which they wore in their private capacity.<sup>2</sup>

Up to the commencement of confinement, the Sakai women make no change in the routine of their daily life. An *enceinte* woman is treated as being in a respectable and enviable condition; she mingles openly with the men, even when in a state of advanced gestation, and apparently lacks any sort of perception of the propriety of retirement, though at the same time this publicity does not imply any immodesty on her part, or the least intention of making her condition known to the bystanders.<sup>3</sup>

When she has gone some months a Sakai woman girds herself with a band which is called "anu," and which is carried round the waist and fastened at the back."<sup>4</sup>

Among the Sakai women miscarriage in the third or fourth month was fairly general. Whenever this happened the remains were simply buried without ceremony.<sup>5</sup>

When a Sakai woman feels the first pang ("t'ran"), she lies down, and does not get up again until her child is delivered.<sup>6</sup>

When her time has come, the sufferer lies upon her back with a cushion or bundle placed under the knees, so as to raise them slightly. A female friend (or the husband, when no other assistance is obtainable) squats down close beside her on the right. Another woman squats down at the sufferer's feet to receive the child, the latter resting her heels upon the floor and pressing them against the knees of this second assistant.<sup>7</sup>

There is no professional *sage-femme*.<sup>8</sup>

At the instant the cord is severed the child is given its name. The child is then washed with "mërian" water, wrapped in a cloth, and handed back to the mother.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xxvi. 154 *seqq.* For further information regarding the face-painting of the midwife and her charges, see below, p. 48 (under "Body-painting").

<sup>3</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 184.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 185.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 186.

<sup>6</sup> "Delivery" is called, according to Vaughan-Stevens, "anak kasih k'luar." This, however, is merely bad (vernacular) Malay, meaning to "bring a child forth" (*Z. f. E.* xxviii. 188).

<sup>7</sup> Bartels observes, that from the description it is clear that the second or the two assistants does not squat but must kneel upon the ground.

<sup>8</sup> Bartels points out that this contradicts what we have already been told, viz., that Vaughan-Stevens obtained a good deal of his information from professional *sage-femmes*, and that they possessed a special kind of hut.

<sup>9</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 188.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 192.

The *sage-femme* possesses a special receptacle called "chit-nât," which serves at one and the same time for the purification of the child and its mother.

This "chit-nât" is a segment of bamboo, which has had a piece amounting to about half its circumference cut away both at top and bottom. The remaining halves have in each case been left, forming projecting spouts, which are rounded off at their free ends, and have their straight edges "toothed" or indented. One edge of each of these projections has six, and the other seven such indentations. The body of the tube is so chosen that the two dividing cuts are made next to (*i.e.* above and below) two adjacent nodes, one of which serves as the bottom of the tube, whilst the other (at the top) has been excised. The tube has a circumference of 22 cm., and a length of 56.5 cm. excluding, and a length of 76 cm. including, the two projections. These latter are decorated with two rows of zigzag lines, whilst two double longitudinal stripes run from end to end of the body of the tube. One pair of these double stripes is distinguished by horizontal cross-lines; the other pair is connected by a zigzag line. Between the adjacent sides of two pairs of stripes further zigzag lines are introduced. The outlines are distinguished by black and white dots.<sup>1</sup>

A special kind of bamboo receptacle, which is equally decorated, is employed for filling the "chit-nât" with water (Fig. 11).

[Partels remarks: "This bamboo is only 29 cm. in length by 13.3 cm. in circumference. At the top it is cut horizontally through the node ('between two adjacent internodes'), at the bottom just below the next adjacent node, so that the node forms the bottom of the receptacle. For half its circumference at the top it is cleanly cut, for the other half it is cut in sharp scallops. The upper portion (of the tube) is plain, the lower covered all round with black and white dots as big as peas. Vaughan-Stevens gives a description of the pattern which he says he found on this 'chit-nât,' but which, in fact, is not to be found on it. He must have confused it with something else. His description, however, runs as follows: 'The figures on this "chit-nât" are the "riong" and "bétong" (?) rattans of the Tabong-story. Commencing at the open end, the triangular figures are Tuhan's finger-prints. The flat (*legenden*) crosses with the line bisecting them are the thorns of the "rotan bétong" ("butong"). This figure represents the "rotan bétong," the spirals which run along it representing the thorns, and the cross-lines combine the idea of a quantity with that of a plant thus crossing itself. Above this in the middle is a row of "bétong" thorns, and below that the "rotan riong." The latter's prickles are naturally much shorter. Spirals of white and black (or red) dots were scattered throughout the entire pattern, according to custom, but no explanation was obtainable.'"]

A very peculiar implement is employed by the Sakai (Sen-oi) for severing the umbilical cord. Three specimens in the Berlin Museum resemble what is called a "fox-tailed" saw, only that they are much smaller, their length being 8.4 cm., 9.3 cm., and 9.2 cm. respectively. They are cut out of wood, and have an elegant handle, which diminishes down to a small "talon"-like projection, united to a wooden blade, which is furnished on one side with rough saw-like teeth from 0.6 to 0.7 cm. deep. One of these knives has a double row of saw teeth. This implement is called "sēmikā" ("smeekar"), and is also used for decorating the "chit-nât," as described above.<sup>2</sup>

The second of the two assistants now lays the patient upon a clean mat and then goes out. Her companion meanwhile takes the afterbirth, and (should the child prove to be a boy) ties it up in a cloth and suspends it upon a tree, where it is left. If, however, the child happens to be a girl, the afterbirth is buried somewhere without further ceremony in the neighbourhood of the house. The

<sup>1</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 191.

reason given for this difference of treatment is that the women are obliged to remain in the house, whereas the men lead an open-air life, and do not remain in one place like the women.<sup>1</sup>

In order to accelerate her recovery the patient has for ten successive days to take a warm infusion called "mërian sējok." In some cases bandage of beaten tree-bark is applied in the same manner as the ordinary loin-cloth. This, however, is not always the case.<sup>2</sup>

For ten days she is forbidden either to drink, or wash in, collyver. For her purification she uses another kind of "chit-nât," though this has to be filled from the bamboo receptacle described above.<sup>3</sup>

[Bartels adds, that this "chit-nât" is furnished, like the preceding one, with projections at each extremity which extend more than half-way round its circumference of the bamboo. The free edges are carved into eight double curves. The bamboo is cut through, as before, in close proximity to the nodes, though in this case the receptacle is made from a piece of thirteen nodes instead of one. The upper node and the three central ones are excised right up to the circumference of the bamboo, the vessel thus forming a simple tube as before. The fourth node is retained and serves as the bottom of the vessel. It contains a small hole which is, however, probably unintentional. Its length, with the projections, amounts to 177 cm., without them to 153 cm. and its circumference is 193 cm. The projections in this case are plain, but at the end to end of the body of the vessel run two longitudinal stripes, one of which is barred with horizontal lines, the other is crossed by zigzags. Both the zigzags each contain four parallel and longitudinal rows of dots, the outer rows the dots being white, whereas in the two inner rows they are black.]<sup>4</sup>

The extremity of the umbilical cord falls from the newly-born infant after a few days, and is then simply thrown away.

For a whole lunar month, however, the child is washed every morning with water out of a special "chit-nât" (Fig. 14), which is filled from the bamboo receptacle already mentioned.

[Bartels adds: "This particular 'chit-nât' differs from the rest in being furnished at the lower end with two long prongs. Each of these prongs measures 11.4 cm. in length by only 1.7 cm. in breadth, whilst the remainder of the vessel measures but 23 cm. in length, with a circumference of 13.8. This 'chit-nât' is cut exactly like those which are formed from a single internode, except that it has no projection at the top, and in place of the projection at the bottom has the two aforesaid prongs. These latter are plain, but the remainder of the vessel is covered with vertical rows of black and pale red dots about as big as the tips of the fingers."]

For the mother's purification a second "chit-nât" is filled (with water) from the bamboo filler, and the sufferer washed with a warm infusion of "mërian."<sup>5</sup>

[Bartels adds: "This 'chit-nât' is the longest of them all. Like the former, it is cleanly cut round half of its circumference only (at top and bottom), and hence it possesses similar projections to those already described. These two projections do not exactly correspond to the same two halves of the circumference respectively, and hence their long axes do not meet, but run parallel to each other. With these projections the receptacle is 185.5 cm. in length, without them 157.5 cm., its circumference being 23.5 cm. The free edges of the projections are carefully carved and adorned with delicate indentations. In other respects, except that of ornamentation, it exactly resembles the receptacle already described. As regards its ornamentation, the projections are



though there was one case in which a woman gave birth to a child at fifty.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere we are informed that the average number of children in a Sakai family is four.<sup>2</sup>

#### NAME-GIVING.

In writing of the "tuang-tuang" ("tuntong") ceremony as performed by the Sakai, Vaughan-Stevens says: "The children received their names from their parents in accordance with dreams, in which there appeared, for instance, either the floor of a hut, the track of a tiger in the jungle, a tree, insect, river, or the like."

According to the same authority, the name of each individual is represented by the pattern of the headband which he (or she) wears. His account, however, is neither altogether clear nor altogether consistent. He says: "The patterns painted on the headband (worn by the Sakai) represent the name of the individual. They are worn by men and women alike, but not by those who are unmarried, and who are not yet therefore entered into the tribe."<sup>3</sup>

#### NAME-BURNING.

The magician exercised great power over the tribe through the fact that he could deprive a recalcitrant member of the tribe of his (or her) "name." In such a case the magician went in full state to the house of the offender, and there solemnly burned the headband of the person concerned, who by this means was completely excluded from the clan. Should, however, the rehabilitation of the offender be desired, the medicine-man, after first painting a new headband with the same pattern as before, went (accompanied by all his colleagues then living in the settlement) into the house of the penitent, who afterwards gave a feast.

Formerly there were many figures for the patterns, which followed, however, no fixed rule. The objects represented were those offered by the jungle, but the exact forms were very much left to fancy, and the colour of the patterns was fugitive. The bands thus painted were only worn for one particular festive occasion, and were then thrown away.<sup>4</sup>

In speaking of some fifteen Sakai women, whom he saw at Kampong Langkor on S. Kerbu, De la Croix says that almost all of them carried a child astride of their hips.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxvi. 161, 162, where we read: "As the painted headbands might only be worn on special occasions, the black lines (or 'demon'-lines) were not retained on the headbands of the lay members of the community (of either sex), and only the red *with black dots* was allowed."

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.* 163,

because they very often accompany the men on the chase in order to bring home the booty or to seek roots on the way; and whenever they stay at home they are recognised by the demons, who have previously seen them in their husbands' company, as protected by the patterns of the latter" (!).

And yet again, on p. 162, we are told that the women wore headbands though only on occasion.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.* xxvi. 163.

## III.—JAKUN.

las.—Of the birth-customs of the Blandas no is yet to hand. I have, however, at different when visiting their encampments, taken down of the charms employed against Birth-demons, h the following are specimens:—

## CHARM AGAINST THE LANGSUIR.

Langhui, Langhuā !  
 Your beak is stumpy,  
 Your feathers are cloth of silk,  
 Your eyes are "crab's-eye" beans,  
 Your heart a young areca-nut,  
 Your blood thread in water,  
 Your veins the thread for binding on cock's-spurs,  
 Your bones twigs of the giant bamboo,  
 Your tail a fan from China.<sup>1</sup>

Descend, O Venom,<sup>2</sup> ascend Neutraliser,  
 Neutralise the Venom in the bones, neutralise it in the veins,  
 Neutralise it in the joints,  
 Neutralise it within the house, neutralise it within the jungle.  
 Descend, O Venom, ascend Neutraliser,  
 And lock up this Langsuir.  
 Descend, O Venom, ascend Neutraliser.

Whilst repeating this charm rub the sufferer ("sapu-kan orang sakit itu") with the leaves or the root ("isi") of the "kělmoyang."<sup>3</sup>

The Langhui is a birth-demon corresponding to the Malay Langsuir (there probably being a close philological connexion, if not identity, between the two names). The Malay Langsuir is believed to be a demon which has sprung from the ghost of a woman who has died in child-birth. The description appears to fit some kind of night-hawk or owl.

Another charm which I obtained from the Blandas was intended to subdue not only the Langsuir, but

<sup>1</sup> The idea is that a spirit may be controlled if the elements of its (supposed) origin are known.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* pain.

<sup>3</sup> May be either *Chamaelidon*, *Homalomena*, or *Alpinia conchigera*, Griff. (*Scitamineæ*); probably the latter = Mal. "lěngkuas ranting."

the Bajang, a familiar spirit well known to the Malays and Blandas alike.

CHARM AGAINST THE BAJANG.

OM, O Bajang Langsuir,  
Thou sprangest from a woman that died in childbirth;  
O Bajang Langsuir,  
Thou betel-quid of Baginda Ali.

The reference to Baginda Ali is due to the superficial Mohammedan influences, which have reached the Blandas through the medium of the Malays.

Yet another charm given me by the Blandas was intended for exorcising the Polong, a familiar demon which is classed with the Bajang and Pêlèsit of the Malays.

CHARM AGAINST THE POLONG.

As the chisel is broken, as the adze-helve is broken,  
Broken in chiselling this fallen tree-trunk,  
Even so break the bones of your jaws, the strings of your tongue,  
And [only] when I retire, may ye go forward.  
Ye who came from the sea, return to the sea,  
Ye who came from the crags, return to the crags,  
Ye who came from the soil, return to the soil,  
Thence is it that ye sprang, O Familiar Demons.

The Pontianak is a birth-demon of a different kind, and this charm too I picked up from the Blandas.

CHARM AGAINST THE PONTIANAK.

O Pontianak, still-born one,  
Die and be crushed 'neath the banked-up roadway!  
[Here are] bamboos,<sup>1</sup> both long and short,  
For cooking the Pontianak, Jin, and Langsuir.  
Remain, Pontianak, among the Tree-shoots!  
Remain, O Jin, among the Epiphytes!  
And lodge not here, O Langsuir!  
Lodge not here, O Jin!  
Lodge not here, O Pontianak!

<sup>1</sup> A comparison with Malay charms, from which this is evidently borrowed, shows that "buloh" (= bamboo) is probably the correct reading. The Langsuir is, as has been said, the ghost of a child who has died in childbirth;

a child who has died at or before birth. The two bamboo-vessels, the long and the short, are naturally required, the long one for cooking the liver of the mother, the shorter for that of the child, the "Jin" being probably interpolated. Cp. *Malay Magic*, p. 320.





from the roots of a creeper called "akar mērian,"<sup>1</sup> and was administered to her as a potion, and this course was continued for about five or ten days, after which the woman would resume her ordinary avocations.

**Mantra.**—Upon the birth-customs of the Mantra Borje remarks that their children are delivered and cared for in the usual manner; a few days after birth the head of the child is shaved; it is not the object of any superstition until it is old enough to be able to distinguish its father and mother. If the child is ill they rub it with lime and turmeric. As to the mother, she remains in the house several days after her confinement. When she is strong enough to resume the ordinary occupations of the household, she must first purify herself by bathing, and by doing so she acquires the right to re-appear.<sup>2</sup>

In addition we are told by Logan that when a Mantra mother was in labour, a cup of water was charmed and administered to her. The juice of certain leaves ("pamanto" and "pamadam") was given to the child, while a charm was repeated.<sup>3</sup> A name was given to the child at the moment the umbilical cord was cut, and this was retained until marriage, when a second name ("gēlar") was bestowed, which was ever afterwards used in lieu of the first. These customs, however, were not inflexible. The birth-name was sometimes superseded (as being unlucky) before marriage, when misfortunes happened to the child, and the second name of the parents frequently gave place to the name of the eldest child with the

prefix Pa' (Father) or Ma' (Mother). The latter was considered a peculiarly pleasing mode of address, parental feeling being no doubt found, in many cases, to be stronger than personal vanity. A similar custom prevailed amongst the Malays of Naning, Rembau, and the states of the interior, and had been probably imported from Sumatra, from whence this portion of the Peninsula was directly colonised. In this connexion Logan observes that the importance of proper names in carrying us back to remote times in a people's history, is well known to the antiquary in Europe. Amongst those aboriginal tribes of the Peninsula whose native language has nearly disappeared before the modern Malay, the inquirer often finds in the names of places and men the principal monuments of antiquity. It is probable that these names are really words of a language once spoken, although the significance of most of them has been lost.<sup>1</sup> The examples of names which he collected (and which included the names of all the relatives and acquaintances of his informant) Logan regarded as an additional proof of the fact that neither Hinduism nor Islamism has impressed these tribes, save in some cases in a slight and superficial manner. No people ever zealously embraced these religions, without the names of the gods of the former and the prophet and apostles of the latter being largely appropriated by them. Lists of Malayan names exhibit many Mohammedan and a few Hindu ones, but the greater number are pure Malayan or ante-Malayan.<sup>2</sup>

Finally we have evidence of the Malayan practice of "roasting" the mother in the statement that the

**Benua-Jakun.**—Of the Benua we are informed that the wife's mother generally acted as midwife, but when absent the husband himself supplied her place. At birth a string to which pieces of turmeric, "bunglei," etc., were fastened, was bound round the neck of the infant as a charm. During the third month of pregnancy the magician or "Poyang" visited the mother, performed certain ceremonies, and bound a charm round her waist in order that all might go well with her and the child. On the occasion of the birth of the first-born child a feast was generally given by the tribe.<sup>2</sup>

From the same authority we learn that a decoction believed to alleviate both pain was made from three roots the "white" and the "black ramuyan," and the "p-ranchu," which are boiled and administered as a potion. Vaughan Stevens adds that the Benar women were, as a rule, three days in labour, and that after delivery they were required to lie down for ten days, during which time they were attended by other married women. (One child out of ten in the present generation was said to die within three days, and nearly half the remainder (especially the girls) before puberty. The supply of milk from the mother was very small indeed, and the child continued to suck until the mother's breasts were dry.)

<sup>1</sup> / I f v l + 11 270, 271. In practice, all found in the 134 (q 2 int, 1 15)

New! old, v l n p 40 17 "No  
assuredly I intended ex it c n n  
ally th h v l a p u e r , l a n n  
th e t o r p a r t i n e n t a l l y r  
of th s e x n r m a p r i t i o n m a e  
d i l e v a t e l e g u n . A n s t r e  
c u l y p u e r t i n m h e r m i l e w e s  
e t d r u b c u l l y e l e l a k n ,  
s e t l e

continued at intervals until the accouchement is over. In protracted cases, the woman is laid upon her stomach, and a fire kindled near her to excite the pains. In order to facilitate the expulsion of the foetus, she is made to stand over the fire. Seven days afterwards, the mother performs ablutions, and returns to her conjugal duties." "Pur" is the name of many wild gingers (*Sutta min*) scap 13, n 3, ante. For "sā-luch" read "sā-luch" n 3, ante.

It is not, however, a matter of course that a child is named at birth. In the Benua, as in the Malay, the child is named at birth, but the name is often changed at a later date. The name is often changed at the age of puberty.

### *Name-giving.*

Names are sometimes given at birth, but in such cases are changed at the age of puberty."

### *Treatment of Children*

Benua mothers carry their children in a sling of bark-cloth, which is passed over the child's back, over one of the mother's shoulders, and under the other, the ends being knotted.<sup>1</sup>

When the child is too small to hold on by embracing the mother's neck with its arms, it is carried behind her back, with its legs clasping her body. It is never carried on the hip, except in cases where the practice may have been learnt from the Malays.<sup>2</sup>

The food (of the Benua children) was eked out with hog's grease from about the third or fourth day of their existence. This might be owing to the habit of not weaning children till they were two, three, or even sometimes four years of age. It was no uncommon spectacle to see an infant of a few weeks and a tat nursing of two years at the breast together. Indulged as the children were during their infancy, they had no sooner arrived at an age when their labour was of the least use, than they were made to assist their parents

<sup>1</sup> *J f I* xxviii 190. In the same context a wooden knife assigned to the "Orang Utan" and used for the same purpose is described. It had the general shape of a common kitchen

<sup>2</sup> *J f I A* vol 1 p 271

<sup>3</sup> *J f I* xxviii 201

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*. But this begs the question. If the Benua Jakun, as there seems every reason to believe are, are not

Mantra placed the wife near the fire in order to drive away the evil spirits who were believed to drink human blood whenever they could find it.<sup>1</sup>

**Benua-Jakun.**—Of the Benua we are informed that the wife's mother generally acted as midwife, but when absent the husband himself supplied her place. At birth a string to which pieces of turmeric, "bunglei," etc., were fastened, was bound round the neck of the infant as a charm. During the third month of pregnancy the magician or "Poyang" visited the mother, performed certain ceremonies, and bound a charm round her waist in order that all might go well with her and the child. On the occasion of the birth of the first-born child a feast was generally given by the tribe.<sup>2</sup>

By Vaughan Stevens we are told that the *magician* attending at a birth crouches beside the reclining woman and massages her, repeating an incantation as he does so.<sup>3</sup>

From the same authority we learn that a decoction believed to alleviate birth pains was made from three roots, the "white" and the "black ramuyan," and the "p'ianchu," which are boiled and administered as a potion. Vaughan-Stevens adds that the Benua women were, as a rule, three days in labour; and that after delivery they were required to lie down for ten days, during which time they were attended by other married women. One child out of ten in the present generation was said to die within three days; and nearly half the remainder (especially the girls) before puberty. The supply of milk from the mother was very small indeed, and the child continued to suck until the mother's breasts were dry.<sup>4</sup>

The knife used by the Benua for severing the umbilical cord was made from the hand of a segment of bamboo. It was a sliver measuring 36.5 cm. in length by 1 cm. in breadth. At one end the sliver was indented and truncated just above

<sup>1</sup> *J. I. I.* vol. 1 pp. 270, 271. This practice is also found among the Besisi (*q.v. ante*, p. 15).

<sup>2</sup> *J. I. I.* vol. 1 pp. 270, 271. Cp. Newbold, vol. II pp. 400-407. "No assistance is rendered, except occasionally by the husband, if present, during the act of parturition; not even by one of the sex; nor is any preparation made to alleviate the pangs. . . . An extract only, procured from the root and leaves of a shrub called, by the Jakun, 'Säluseli,' or 'puwar,' is given towards

continued at intervals until the accouchement is over. In protracted cases, the woman is laid upon her stomach, and a fire kindled near her to excite the pains. In order to facilitate the expulsion of the afterbirth, she is made to stand over the fire. Seven days afterwards, the mother performs ablutions, and returns to her conjugal duties." "Puar" is the name of many wild gingers (*Sittamim*); see p. 13, n. 3, *ante*. For "säluseli" read "sälusoh," cp. p. 25, *infra*.  
<sup>3</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, II. 143.

"... and the other end was cut through to the middle and the end of the tube was closed. The tube was then used for the purpose of blowing out the tube with air, by means of the mouth."

### *Name-giving.*

Names are sometimes given at birth, but in such cases are changed at the age of puberty.<sup>2</sup>

### *Treatment of Children.*

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<sup>1</sup> *J. f. E.* xxviii. 190. In the same context a wooden knife, assigned to the "Orang Utan," and used for the same purpose, is described. It had the general shape of a common kitchen knife, and measured 26.5 cm. in length, its blade was 1.6 cm. in breadth, and

<sup>2</sup> *J. f. A.* vol. i. p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *J. f. E.* xxviii. 201.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* But this begs the question. If the Benua-Jakun, as there seems every reason to believe, are mainly of Malayan origin, there seems no reason why the custom should not be in-

in different employments. The effect of this training was that the young Benua men and women were 'highly robust and active compared with the Malays, and capable of enduring with cheerfulness an amount of labour from which the latter would shrink.<sup>1</sup>

**Jakun.**—We now come to the Jakun, properly so-called, of whose birth-customs, Captain Begbie, an old writer on the Peninsula, observed that when a woman was in labour, the Jakun took a round piece of wood, which they fastened at both ends in a shed. The woman was laid upon this, face downwards and pressing upon the abdomen, until the child was born. Meanwhile the husband kindled a fire before her, which was supposed to be of essential service, and performed the office of midwife; and after the child was born, the woman was put close to the fire. To this account the same writer added that the Jakun named their children simply from the tree under which they happened to be brought forth.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Favre has recorded that no assistance was ordinarily given to lying-in Jakun women; their physicians or Pawangs were not permitted to appear in such circumstances, and midwives were not known amongst them. It was reported that in several tribes, the children, as soon as born, were carried to the nearest rivulet, washed and brought back to the house, where a fire was kindled, upon which incense or benzoin was thrown, when the child was passed over it several times. Favre adds that we know from history that the practice of passing children over fire was in all times much practised among heathen nations; and that it is still practised in China and other places. A few days after the birth

<sup>1</sup> *J. L. A.* vol. 1. p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Begbie, pp. 13, 14.

of the child, the father gave him a name, which was usually taken from the name of some tree, fruit, or colour.

*Food-taboos.*

A considerable number of food-taboos are found among the Jakun; e.g. among the tribes dwelling on the Madek River in Johor, of whom D. F. A. Hervey has related a curious superstition that prevailed among them, which, so long as the children were unable to walk, prevented their parents from using as food certain fish and animals, but as soon as the little ones had acquired the use of their legs, this restriction was removed, and the parents were once more able to indulge in what had so long been forbidden ("pan-tang"). Should this superstition fail to be complied with, and should any parent eat of any of the forbidden creatures during this period of restriction, the children were supposed to be liable to an illness called "būsong," which arises, according to the Malays, from "swollen stomach" ("prūt kēmbong").<sup>2</sup> The following was the list of fish and animals which were forbidden under the above circumstances:—

FISH.—The "nōm," the "bēgāhak," the "sēng-ārat," the "tōman," and the "sēbārau."

ANIMALS.—Deer of all kinds, both the sambhur ("rusa") and roe-deer ("kijang"); chevrotins, e.g. the mouse-deer ("p'landok"), and the "nāpoh"; the wild pig (the "jōkōt" and the "babi"); fowls and eggs; the lace lizard ("biāwak"), the large water-lizard ("gēriang"); the land-tortoise ("kūra-kūra"), and a variety of the preceding called "haning," which is larger

<sup>1</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. ii. p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> Hervey describes this as a species of diarrhoea. It is, however, rather a

dropsical inflammation of the stomach (ascites), the symptoms being accurately described by the Malay phrase.



and has a flatter shell; the "biuku," resembling the "pěnyu tuntong" (*sic*, ? the freshwater turtle), a small tortoise called "jahük," etc.<sup>1</sup>

The rest of this account of Jakun birth-customs is taken mainly from the German publications embodying the work of Vaughan-Stevens.

#### BIRTH-CUSTOMS.<sup>2</sup>

*Enant* Jakun women, unlike the Sakai, withdraw when strangers (even if members of their own race) are present, and hence, though not perhaps intentionally, they attract much more attention than the Sakai women, who do not trouble themselves about their condition.<sup>3</sup>

A Jakun husband, if he can avoid it, never goes out of the sight of his wife, when she is in this condition. This circumstance often causes difficulties when men are wanted either as bearers or guides. Through the presence of the man the well-being of the child in the mother's body is believed to be somehow furthered.

A Jakun woman during pregnancy occasionally carries with her a shell-shaped piece of wood to protect her unborn child.<sup>4</sup>

Another Jakun custom was that a bundle of *ijok* ("ego") fibres were hung up in a public place in order to warn passers-by that there was a woman in travail in close proximity. These *ijok* fibres consist of the black fibrous covering of the base of the leaf-stalk of the sugar-palm (*Areca*). Bundles of these fibres, as big as a child's head, were always kept by the women in readiness for such a purpose. Any man who saw the sign would at once turn back again.<sup>5</sup>

The treatment of the umbilical cord consisted in measuring it off from the child's navel to its knee, and there tying it fast with a string (preparatory to severing it).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. A. I. S.*, 35, Pl., No. 8, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii, 185-198.

<sup>3</sup> Vaughan-Stevens adds that the Jakun women during pregnancy are in no way restricted as to diet. This statement, however, is certainly incorrect, the fact that their diet is restricted having been observed by D. F. A. Hervey and others.

Vaughan-Stevens seems to have considered this "shell-shaped" piece of wood as something unusual, but there can be little or no doubt that what he saw was the ordinary "wai tonament" (shaped like a fan shell or a heart as the case may be, made either of wood, coconut shell, or silver, according to the parent's means) that is worn by female children up to the age of five or six, and which may easily have been carried by the mother as a charm in anticipation.

<sup>4</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii, 188.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 189.

Bartels does not seem to have quite caught the point of Vaughan-Stevens's remarks here. The meaning of the passage (as personal investigations have shown) is that the exact point at which the cord ought to be severed is determined by measuring off it a length equal to the child's thigh-bone (hip to knee) - this standard of measurement giving the point required. I may add that it is not at all clear from the context of what tribe Vaughan-Stevens is here speaking. The remark has been introduced with other matter concerning the O. Laut, but evidently in error, as it contradicts the statement about the O. Laut on page 191 (line 18). It must, however, as it is identical with the Malay custom, either refer to some Malayizing or Malayan tribe, probably to the Jakun. I think, indeed, there can be very little doubt that it refers to these latter, as it thus gives effect to the otherwise pointless remark on page 191 of the same passage.

If the child is a boy, the undiluted cord is then tied to one of his father's "narrower strokes," preferably to one with which his father has already sailed some day. It is then dipped in sea-water and washed, and hung up to dry in the sun. When dry it is carefully quartered, together with the stone, and the quarters laid down up. At this juncture the stone is made over to him to be carefully kept, since such a stone never misleads its mark.<sup>1</sup>

## SEX OMENS.

In order to ascertain the probable sex of an expected child the Jakun women wait until they dream of a certain number, a circumstance which invariably occurs, since they retire to rest filled with expectation of it.

For the (sacred-five) number of nights thus dreamed of (commencing with the next night that follows that of the dream onwards), the woman sits up the whole night in company with as many female friends of riper years as she likes until (between sunset and sunrise) she hears the cry or note of some particular bird or beast. The first cry plainly heard by the entire company decides whether the expected infant is to be a boy or a girl. If the cry is heard on the right side of the company, it will be a boy, if on the left, a girl. If, on the other hand, the cry clearly comes from the front and not from the sides, great tribulation prevails, since the child will not live to grow up. Since, however, the wish is father to the thought, this is seldom, if ever, reported as occurring. But worst of all is the cry heard from behind, which indicates that the child will either be still-born or will die shortly after birth. In such a case an exclamation of pain from all present warns the husband to rise and drive away the unwelcome originator of the cry. When this has been done and the cry is heard again either on the right hand or the left, the danger is averted.<sup>2</sup>

Since, however, according to the older rules, the houses of the women always had the sea behind them, the younger people would declare positively that it was the sea that had made the noise in question, and that the women had made a mistake. Or else the husband entered his boat and rowed in the direction of the cry, and since it could only have been that of a bird, he hunted it back for some distance towards the side, so that it might be heard from the side again, and the expectant mother might be calmed. The husband had the power of averting the evil, so long as he only drove it sideways away from the front, should it happen that his wife would not accept the well-meant fictions of her female friends, to the effect that the cry came from the required direction.<sup>3</sup>

If, as may be taken for certain, the Jakun once really believed in these omens, they have certainly outgrown them in most cases at the present day. It is quite possible that they may still trouble some of the women, but from the fact that these well-meant fictions on the part of the woman's friends are admitted to be such, it may be inferred that the retention of the ceremony at present has little more than the strength of ancient custom. Moreover, its retention may perhaps be further favoured by the fact that on the following day there is given a small feast to which all the neighbours are invited. This feast is called the "Little Forage," whilst the richer and more complete banquet which follows the birth of the child is called the "Big Forage." The marriage feast again is called, *intur a'za*, the "Double Forage," and the funeral repast the "Last Forage."<sup>4</sup>

Before leaving this subject it is interesting to record the Jakun belief that phosphorescent jelly-fishes in the sea were the wandering souls of men awaiting the impending birth of a child in order to try and enter its body.<sup>5</sup>

The practice of abortion was well understood by the Jakun women. It was procured in order to avoid the labour which the bringing-up of the child would entail. It was, however, very seldom practised, for if it was discovered by the

<sup>1</sup> Z. J. E. xxviii. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 185-187.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 187.

husband, he had the right of giving his wife a sound drubbing with a club, and if in such a case he accidentally killed her, he was not brought to justice for doing so. In the case of a premature delivery, a sort of council of *sage-femmes* or elderly women might be called to try whether the woman had procured abortion. If she were found guilty, she was delivered over to her husband for punishment. He was not, however, compelled to punish her, and if he forbore, she escaped without a penalty.<sup>1</sup>

When an unmarried Jakun girl had recourse to procuring abortion, she entirely lost all position and status in the clan. She was despised by the other women, and scorned as a bride by the men; and finally she exposed herself to the disgrace of being chastised by her parents.<sup>2</sup>

No cranial deformation is practised by the Jakun. "The heads of the children are left in their natural shape and are not compressed in any way."<sup>3</sup>

The average number of children born to a Jakun is three.<sup>4</sup>

#### TREATMENT OF CHILDREN.<sup>5</sup>

The Jakun never leave their little children alone, as the other tribes do. Wherever the parents go, the mother carries the child, the father helping her when there are several children, and she has no female relation or friend at hand to assist.

The Jakun women carry their children slung at their backs in a sling made either of cotton stuff or bark cloth. The sling is passed round the lower part of the child's body and back and over the mother's breast, an additional strip being frequently passed round the mother's forehead.

The child's legs are turned upwards towards the front, in line with the mother's hips.

If the child wants to suck, it is pulled round to the breast, and not fed (as among the Sakai) by throwing the breast over the shoulder—except perhaps in a very few cases when the breasts of a Jakun mother who has given birth to a very numerous progeny have become abnormally developed. A Jakun child may also be seen sucking with its head pushed forward under the mother's arm.

The Jakun women declare that in former times they never carried their children on their hips as the Sakai and Malay women do. Now, however, they have adopted the practice, which they have borrowed, as in so many other cases, from the tribes in their vicinity.<sup>6</sup>

The Jakun seen by Vaughan Stevens declared that they (like the O. Laut) had never seen twins. If twins were to be born, they would be regarded as an ~~ab-~~ <sup>ab-</sup> ~~normal~~ <sup>normal</sup> ~~birth~~ <sup>birth</sup>, since later on there would be two children to help with the work. The father, however, would feel an uncertainty, as to whether some other man had not helped him.<sup>7</sup>

Vaughan-Stevens describes another almost obsolete custom of the Jakun women, which is still, however (he says), occasionally practised. This is that whenever a Jakun woman loses her first-born, if the latter happens to be a boy, she pulls off the wrapper of cloth which she wears by way of undergarment and puts on a loin-cloth of tree bark in its place. Over this bark girdle cotton-cloth might be worn, but the bark-cloth must be worn immediately next the skin, and that until a full month had elapsed since the child's death, after which it might be discontinued.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* xxix. 185. From the context this passage appears to apply to the Jakun. The name of the race referred to in this connexion is not

mentioned, however.

<sup>4</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 102.

<sup>5</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 199-201.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 200.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 199.

ORANG LAUT OR SEA-JAKUN.

**O. Laut, S'letar.**—The solitary statement that we possess as to the birth customs of the Orang Laut, S'letar is to the effect that their children were only welcomed to the world by the mother's joy.<sup>1</sup>

**O. Laut, Sabimba.**—Logan informs us that among the Sabimba the husband alone assisted at births. To aid parturition a decoction of "sálusoh" leaves was administered, and blowing out of the mouth ("sëmboran") was also practised as among the Malays. A fire was kindled near the mother to scare away evil spirits. A decoction of the leaves of the "mëngkuas" was also given to the mother. The umbilical cord was cut with a knife or sliver of rattan ("sëmbilu rotan"), and powdered turmeric applied. On the third day the mother was bathed in water mixed with a decoction of "kamaso" leaves, followed by an application of the juice of limes. She then resumed her wanderings in the jungle in search of food, her child being bound closely under her arm with its mouth to the breast. It did not receive a name till it was a few months old. The children of the Sabimba were never beaten.<sup>2</sup>

**O. Laut, Muka Kuning.**—Of the Muka Kunings we are told that a midwife ("bidan") assisted at births, and received four thousand rattans on the first occasion of the kind in the family, three thousand on the second, two thousand on the third, and a thousand for any subsequent birth. The only medicine employed was a decoction of the bark of "kayu pangar," which was administered to the mother, and a decoction of the root which was given to the child.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. A. vol. i. p. 344\*.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid. p. 298.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid. p. 338\*.*

**O. Laut, Beduanda Kallang.**—At child-birth among the Beduanda Kallang the mother drank a decoction of the leaves of mangrove trees ("bakau") that had fallen from the trees and floated on the water, and the child was given a little of the expressed juice of the fruit of the "k'luna."<sup>1</sup>

**\*Orang Laut (no locality specified).**—The rest of this account of the birth-customs of the Orang Laut in general is taken from Vaughan-Stevens, who gives no means of identifying the tribe.

Each family group of the Orang Laut contains one or more old women who follow the profession of *sage-femme*. Their status varies, and they are paid by means of a present.<sup>2</sup>

When delivery took place on board a boat, the space available was naturally very restricted. Hence the patient was either supported in an upright position or laid face downwards upon one of the boat's transoms which had been temporarily broadened by the addition of cross-pieces. Behind the patient squatted a woman, who held her fast at the back, while a second, whose duty it was to receive the child, and also to wash it as soon as it was born, sat in the bottom of the boat.<sup>3</sup>

The Orang Laut cut off the umbilical cord shorter than the Jakun. Their standard of measurement is three "breadths" of the bamboo knife used for the operation, the blade of the latter being required to be of the same breadth as the *sage-femme's* middle finger.<sup>4</sup>

Among the Orang Laut the mother half an hour after her confinement washes herself in the sea, and after a few days returns to her duties. In a case which they regard as being so natural, the Orang Laut apply no special treatment; for about a month, however, the mother has the region of the abdomen bound round with a cloth skirt ("sarong") in place of the loin-cloth which up to that time she had been wearing.<sup>5</sup>

A considerable amount of noise is made by the O. Laut as soon as a child is born to them. All present unite in shouting and in beating anything which will make a noise, the greater the clamor the better. The hubbub lasts for about ten minutes at the shortest to half an hour at the longest, and is especially intended to scare away any evil spirits which might otherwise attack either mother or child. As soon, however, as the cord is cut, the demons are thought to have lost their opportunity. In the intervals of the time the old woman who has assisted at the delivery blows upon the child, but this, however, is no charm, or at least is not so regarded by the O. Laut.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Orang Laut, the flying lizards of the Peninsula look out for birth, and cause young newly-arrived souls to enter into the bodies of new-born children, by which means they at once obtain possession of their future embodiment. They regard these flying lizards as subordinate to the great blind Flying Lizard of their legends, which keeps watch over the [Li] stone, for

<sup>1</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* f. E. xxviii. 104, 165.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 198.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 192. *Sic.* The practice of blowing upon the child is, of course, a wide-spread magic ceremony.

which, except part of the *Urotaea* in *Urotaea*. They have the power of flying from earth to the sky, and vice versa, even to make arrangements with this power. One day an *Orang Laut* who fell from a tree, and his companion, the crocodile, went down to avenge its death by dragging from pointing out the spot where a child of the offender to the land which had been appointed for it.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the small flying lizards have the power of turning themselves into crocodiles at will. The crocodile and the lizard are regarded as brothers, and each as a flying lizard learns from its Chief that any person's stone (representing his soul) is killed and buried, the former is commissioned to convey the order for the death-penalty to the person concerned, and to execute it. This can be accomplished either in its own shape or in that of a snake (whose form it can assume at will when on land), in that of a crocodile (when it is in the water), or through any other agent whatsoever. Hence whenever an *Orang Laut* dies from the bite of a snake, or is seized by a crocodile or shark (the most probable causes of death according to their manner of living), or sucked down and drowned through some invisible agency, the *Orang Laut* all agree that it was the doing of the small flying lizard acting under the orders of the big blind lizard (that is, the life stone).<sup>2</sup>

The *Orang Laut* women when suckling their children do not throw the breast over the shoulder, though they often pass it sideways under the mother's arm. Like the Jakun mothers, they do not wean their children until their breasts are dry. There is seldom too little milk at first. In such an event the child would be fed by one of the mother's friends or relations, though this would not be held to constitute a closer relationship between the foster-child and the children of its foster-mother. The women do not retire out of sight when the child is being suckled.<sup>3</sup>

The birth of a child is signified by means of a split stick, in the cleft of which a leaf is jammed. If the child is a girl, the stick retains its bark, if a boy the stick is peeled.<sup>4</sup>

No steps were taken to procure abortion. Such an abomination would have been considered impossible.<sup>5</sup>

The *Orang Laut* deny that child murder has ever been practised among or even been charged to them. They are amply supplied with food, and the children are early taught to forage for themselves, so that they were not subjected to any such temptation. As among the Jakuns, twins are almost unknown.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. F. B.*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

## CHAPTER II.

### MATURITY CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

IF we differentiate as we ought the practice of tattooing (*i.e.* of decorating the person with punctured designs filled with pigment) from the various forms of scarification and raised cicatrices or keloids, we shall feel a considerable measure of doubt as to the extent to which any form of tattooing, properly so called, exists among the tribes of the Malay Peninsula. It is true that several writers of some authority employ (loosely, as I think) the word "tattooing" in speaking of the face-decoration of some of the Semang and Sakai tribes of Perak; and it is true that one of these writers (Miklucho-Maclay) even describes the operation as being performed with a needle,<sup>1</sup> but in none of these instances, not even in the latter, is the *modus operandi* described, and in default of evidence of this kind, we can only say that there is no adequate statement of tattooing as known to these tribes.<sup>2</sup> Of the practice of skin-scarification, on the other hand, as well as of face-painting, there is abundant evidence, and, unless the contrary fact can be proved, it is safest to suppose that most of the writers mentioned above

<sup>1</sup> *J. R. A. S., S. B.*, No. 2, p. 214. Since penning the above, Mr. Leonard Wray has written me to the effect that "among the Perak Sakai tattooing is met with," though all details as to its form are still wanting.

have carelessly used the word "tattooing" as the equivalent of skin-scarification, a confusion which it would be easy to parallel from the writings of travellers in other savage countries. If this explanation, which to me appears to be the one that will best fit all the facts, be accepted, the next question to be considered is whether such "tattooing" as exists should properly be classified as a custom of Negrito or Sakai origin. That it is not a custom of Jakun origin may be taken as certain, since none of the purer Jakun tribes, so far as our information goes, ever practise it. It therefore almost certainly originated either among the Semang or among the Sakai, and the balance of evidence seems to show that it is not indigenous among the Semang. Of all the Negritos that I saw in Kedah and Kelantan, only one (a woman who displayed some traces of Sakai admixture) showed any evidence of it. And if we go further afield, to the nearest spot whence collateral testimony as to the customs of the Negritos may be obtained, *i.e.* to the Andaman Islands, we find that none of the tribes there practised this method of decorating the skin of the face, and that the "Jarawa" tribe apparently did not tattoo any part of the body.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the cultural focus of this practice appears to be in the valley of the Plus in Ulu Perak, a district mainly under the influence of the Sakai.

To return to the former question, that of real tattooing, I may quote in support of a similar conclusion the opinion expressed by Mr. L. Wray, who has recently written me that with regard to the place of its origin, he believes it (as I do) to be a Sakai,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Man's *Andaman*, p. 113, note to p. 111, "the Jarawa do not tattoo." "the face is never tattooed"; and also



and not a Semang custom—firstly, because he has never seen it on a Semang, and secondly, because tattooing would not show on the nearly black skin of the Negrito.<sup>1</sup>

Of the prevalence of some form of tattooing or scarification in Pahang I have not yet been able to get corroborative evidence, but one or other of these practices was certainly found among the Sakai tribes of Ulu Langat in Selangor, who were not long since described as a "tattooed" race.<sup>2</sup>

On the whole, therefore, it seems best to conclude that both these customs, whether tattooing or scarifying are of Sakai origin, and that even where we find them established among the Semang, they are really exotic.

It may, I think, be very reasonably suggested that most forms of body-paint employed by these tribes may have originated in the application of (1) magical designs to the body; and that out of the most commonly used forms developed, on the one hand, (2) the so-called "tribal marks" (where indeed these can be properly established), and (3), on the other, merely decorative designs.<sup>3</sup> The bulk of our information on the subject comes from Vaughan-Stevens, but it is admittedly an eclectic account, and it would certainly be the height of rashness to attempt to build upon this flimsy foundation until the necessary material comes to hand for checking it. Quite apart from any question of his methods, Vaughan-Stevens himself declares

<sup>1</sup> This second reason is not by itself, of course, conclusive.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. G. Campbell, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Vaughan-Stevens classifies these designs as follows: (a) Tribal marks, (b) charms against spirits, (c) mere decoration. This classification is very much on the same lines as that given

above, but class (b) is not wide enough, some of the designs employed being undoubtedly love-charms intended to make the person of the wearer attractive; it is also probable that magical designs (V.-St.'s class (b)) preceded tribal marks (his class (a)), which were probably developed out of them.

(p. 150) that it is now a very rare thing to meet with the old and correct designs. Here and there in remote tribes the women are still in the habit of painting their faces, but the patterns are very often employed solely for ornament, and are either a mere improvisation of the individual, or incorrect or abridged imitations of the old original design, while frequently the private totem (*sic*) of the family has replaced the original pattern of the tribe.<sup>1</sup>

This custom (of body-paint) is of much wider distribution than that of scarification. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the marks of the latter are indelible, whereas the painted designs can be removed at a moment's notice should there be any apprehension (always a lively one in the hearts of these timid aboriginal races) of ridicule on the part of strangers who do not practise it.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly we find that there are very few, if any, wild people of the Peninsula who do not, on special occasions at least, indulge in the practice, many of them being tribes which no doubt formerly practised scarification or tattooing.

It is to be seen among Semang, Sakai, and Jakun, but more especially among the Sakai. The colours used are black, white, red, and occasionally yellow, which last two appear to be of equivalent value from a magical point of view.

By the same method of weighing the evidence,<sup>3</sup> I should be led to classify the custom of perforating the nose-cartilage (with the wearing of the nose-bar or nose-quill) as a Sakai practice, for in this case too the Andamanese evidence is of a negative character,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Z. f. E.* xxvi. p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> "In this [non-perforation of the nose-cartilage] the Andamanese differ

whereas this identical custom is certainly found almost everywhere among the purer Sakai tribes, even in the east coast states (*e.g.* Pahang, where a nose-ring is sometimes substituted for the quill), and as far south as Ulu Langat in Selangor, where the Orang Bukit were described by Campbell, in the passage referred to above, as a race that "put skewers through their noses,"<sup>1</sup> and probably yet further south as far as Negri Sembilan. On the other hand, the practices of filing and blackening the teeth are widely-spread customs which are found (generally speaking) throughout the whole of the Malayan region, and the custom of ear-boring is practically universal.

Shaving the head, with the exception of a top-knot, which is often temporarily removed at puberty, may be seen among the Semang, but so rarely that it may be regarded as borrowed from the Malays, amongst whom it is common enough. With regard to the Sakai and the Jakun there is very little evidence, though, if we may judge from photographs, the latter certainly practise it to some extent. The apparent system of totemism reported by Vaughan-Stevens, which is given below (p. 62), rests on most unsatisfactory evidence, which can only have come, I think, from the use of "leading questions."<sup>2</sup>

## I. -- SEMANG.

### *Nose-boring.*

**Kedah Semang.** - The boring of the nose-cartilage is, as already explained, most probably a Sakai custom

greatly from their neighbours the Nicobarese, who not only flatten the occiputs of their children in infancy, but from the period of puberty, blacken their teeth, and perforate the lobes of their ears to such an extent as to

enable them by the time they are full-grown to insert a wooden cylindrical instrument three-quarters of an inch thick."—Man's *Andamanese*, p. 115.

<sup>1</sup> J. A. G. Campbell, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 258-260, *infra*.

which has been borrowed by the few Semang who are now found practising it.<sup>1</sup> It was not practised at all by the Semang of Kedah, nor did we see any examples of it among the Pangan of Kelantan. I was told, however, that some of the Belimbing tribes (Pangan) were in the habit of passing pieces of stick or stems of grasses through a perforation in the cartilage. None of the Negritos, however, that I saw, either on the east or west coast, showed the slightest trace of it.

**Perak Semang.**—It is also said to occur among the Semang of Perak.

### *Ear-boring.*

**Kedah Semang.** This is a custom of both sexes.

- It is said to be performed in the case of girl-children as soon after birth as possible, the lobe being bored with a porcupine's quill, or some such article, and the hole enlarged by inserting a rolled-up strip of cloth or banana-leaf on ordinary, and of licuala ("palas") leaf on festive occasions.<sup>2</sup> Boys also occasionally have a hole bored in one lobe only, in which they carry the native cigarette, as is the practice, I believe, in Burma and elsewhere. I did not see any of the Kedah Semang actually wearing an ear-quill, though it has been recorded in Perak.

### *Tooth-filing.*

- **Kedah Semang.**—In Kedah the teeth were frequently filed, the six front teeth of the upper jaw being thus treated, as among the neighbouring Malay tribes. This filing is performed by means of a smooth piece of sandstone from the nearest brook, and is said to be

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 150, *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> In the Belimbing district of Ulu Kelantan, where the Pangan practise

this custom, the roll of "palas" is called "gerinchung." The Pangan of Jelei (Pahang) wear incised bamboo ear-plugs.

performed at the age of puberty irrespective of sex, probably not long before marriage, as is the practice of the Inland Malays, from whom they learnt it.

The six front teeth of the upper jaw of a Semang skull brought home by the writer were filed, the filing being of the "concave" kind (in which the front part of the teeth is filed away, so that the teeth thus treated become concave instead of convex).

In the Ulu Kelantan district the various Pangan tribes are also alleged to practise tooth-filing,<sup>1</sup> and some of them are even said to blacken the teeth. I think, however, that with very little doubt, both this Pangan practice of tooth-filing and that of blackening the teeth (especially the latter) must have been of Malay origin. This last practice, at all events, is exceedingly rare among the wild tribes, though it is common enough with the Malays. Most of the Semang that we measured had had their teeth filed as described, but not one had them blackened.

### *Other Forms of Initiation.*

All the Semang without exception deny that they ever circumcise or incise, except of course when they become converts to Mohammedanism.

### *Scarification or "Tattooing."*

**Kedah Semang.**—The actual practice of tattooing properly so called (*i.e.* skin-puncturation) is, so far as I was able to ascertain, unknown to the Negritos of Kedah, and even with regard to scarification the evidence is of the scantiest character, and it would

<sup>1</sup> A. St. mentions that he saw filed teeth among some "very black people, who lived on the boundary of the

Pangan or Eastern Semang."—*Z. f. E.* xxix. p. 180. The filing is performed in Kelantan, as in Kedah, with sandstone.

perhaps be nearest the truth to surmise that such of the Perak Semang as practise it, have adopted it from neighbouring tribes of Sakai. At Belimbing in Ulu Kelantan, however, I was told that among the Pangan of those parts certain "marks" (scarifications) were worn on the face, the design being scratched in on the skin by means of a thorn ("duri"). The marks on the forehead were more or less vertical, and those on the cheek horizontal; but sometimes the design is only temporarily marked out with charcoal. I did not, however, see any Semang who were so marked, though I saw a large number who were not.

At Siong (in Kedah) the wife of the tribal chief (who, however, came from the Plus district in Perak and had Sakai blood in her) had four distinct scarifications upon the left cheek, with similar faint marks on the right cheek also. These marks, which were not quite horizontal but slightly divergent, started from the nose and were carried across the cheek, each of them forming a dark-red (almost black) stripe across the skin, looking like the cut of a whip-lash. She told me that these marks on her face were made when she was quite young and living in the valley of Ulu Plus. The finely serrated edge of a sugar-cane leaf was drawn lightly across the skin excoriating it, after which soot or powdered charcoal was rubbed into the incision. She assured me at the time that it was a tribal mark, the object of which was that any member of the tribe who bore it might be known to their friends whenever they met in a distant part of the country.

Although, however, marks of this kind may often merely be (as is indeed indicated by my informant's reply), of the nature of local "fashions," such as serve to distinguish the people of one district from the

people of another, not only in Asia, but in most parts of the world, not even excepting the continent of Europe, this need not preclude their use as magic.

**Perak Semang.**—The foregoing information, which was given me by the Kedah tribes, tallies closely with De Morgan's account of what he calls "tattooing," which from the importance of the subject is worth quoting verbatim: "The Semang and Sakai tattoo themselves differently" <sup>1</sup> (for a fuller account see twelve illustrations in *L'Homme*, ii. 555). "Some draw (parallel or divergent) black lines upon their faces, starting from the nose and continuing across the cheeks or the forehead. These designs are frequently unsymmetrical: *frequently too they are only found on one side of the face.* These adornments are as frequent among men as among women, and are indelible. They are produced by lightly raising the skin and introducing beneath it colouring matter such as soot or powdered charcoal."

### *Body-paint.*

**Kedah Semang.**—The custom of painting the body is indulged in rather for purposes of magic than for those of mere adornment, as it so often is among the Sakai. The facts are as follows. Among the Semang of the east coast in Ulu Kelantan I was told that the Pangan of Belimbing had the habit of tattooing or scarifying both their cheeks and their foreheads, but that occasionally, *in lieu* of this, they merely marked out the design with charcoal.

<sup>1</sup> It is when this name which (van Zotti) states that the Semang women tattoo and paint their faces "in the same manner" as the Sakai. The words, however, are very vague ("elles se tatouent et peignent de la même manière

elles"), and do not necessarily imply any identity of design.

<sup>2</sup> De Morgan 412; *L'Homme*, ii. 581; and *J. A. I. S., S. B.*, No. 2, p. 214 (of the Pangan, whom M. Maclay mis-calls Sakai).

Further, in Kedah one of the women of the tribe in explaining to me that the decorative designs of the bamboo combs worn by Semang women were intended for repelling various evil influences, volunteered the information that similar patterns were sometimes painted on the women's bodies, for a similar (i.e. *magical*) object, these latter being not therefore solely the outcome of local whims or fashions. ••

I saw, besides, among these Kedah Semang, a species of yellow unguent (said by the wearer to be pure coconut-oil) applied to the cheeks, the tip of the nose, etc., by the men, who informed me at the time that they only wore it by way of decoration. At the same time, in describing the love-charm called "chindwai," they explained that the application of oil to the face and breast was for purposes of magic, and this I believe to have been the original motive of all body-paint practised by the Semang.

In substitution for the yellow colour when coconut-oil is unprocurable, the Semang obtain a similar pigment from the wild "saffron" or turmeric. Among the Pangan of Ulu Kelantan this latter is converted (by mixing with lime) into a sort of burnt-red ochre.

Hence we see that at least three colours, black, yellow, and red, are certainly used by the Negritos and to these white (obtained by slaking a little shell-lime) should be added.

On the other hand, it is not clear, from our existing information, whether any kind of red ochre is obtained among the Semang (as among the Sakai), by the grinding down of lumps of iron ore or hematite.

**Perak Semang.**—In the account of Semang traditions there is perhaps an allusion to the supposed origin of



body-paint in the story of the charred stick which Kamoj, the ruler of the damned, is said to have adopted as his emblem, in place of the burning brand which he received from Kari.<sup>1</sup>

So too Vaughan-Stevens records that the Semang were in the habit of marking their bodies with charcoal for medicinal, (*i.e.* magical) purposes, wherever any pain might be felt.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to the Negritos of Perak, De Morgan mentions the fact (referred to above), that they both "paint and tattoo themselves in the same manner" as the Sakai, but his phrase is extremely vague, and he gives no further details. Vaughan-Stevens, on the other hand, declares that "to the Negritos, both painting and tattooing are unknown."<sup>3</sup>

## II.—SAKAI.

### *Nose-boring.*

**Perak Sakai.**—Colonel Low has informed us that the perforation of the cartilage of the nose (through which porcupine's quills are worn) is the distinguishing characteristic of the Orang Alas (*i.e.* the Sakai) of Ulu Kinta<sup>1</sup> in Perak.

From other sources we learn that the Sakai of Perak are in the habit of perforating the septum of the nose, through which they insert the quill of a porcupine or a bar of some other material (wood or bone) which is not unfrequently decorated with incised rings.

It appears further that they occasionally wear in the same way a rolled-up piece of banana-leaf. This

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii 131  
*loc. cit.*  
*ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> In original "Ulu Kantu"  
*J. I. L.* vol. iv. p. 429. cp  
*J. R. I. S.*, N. B., No. 4, p. 30.



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

A B

*Dr. Macdonald at 1875*



latter, however, is not worn for ornamental purposes, but is intended, as in the case of the ear-hole, to enlarge the perforation of the cartilage.<sup>1</sup>

### *Ear-boring.*

**Perak Sakai.**—The women sometimes wear a porcupine's quill passed through the perforation in the lobe of the ear. Wooden and other ear-studs or plugs and ear-rings are, however, not uncommonly substituted.<sup>2</sup>

The foregoing account is corroborated by Colonel Low, in the passage quoted above, and Hale, who states that they also "wear the same things" (*i.e.* porcupine's quills, etc.) in their ears, and there appears to be a tendency to enlarge the perforations. Mr. Hale observed two women wearing rolls of cloth as large as his little finger, and he found great difficulty in abstracting one of these rolls, which fitted very tightly.<sup>3</sup>

So, too, in a recent letter to me, Mr. L. Wray observes that ear-studs or plugs made of decorated bamboo, and with a diameter of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in. (31 mm.), are worn by the Sakai of Perak, who occasionally insert in them both leaves and flowers.

### *Tooth-filing.*

**Perak Sakai.**—There is some doubt as to whether the practice of filing the teeth obtains among the Perak Sakai. De Morgan says that the teeth (of the Perak Sakai) were magnificent and were never filed, and that he frequently inquired of Sakai chiefs whether this practice existed, but that they as often denied it.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid* vol. 1 p. 156

<sup>2</sup> De Morgan, vii 414; *L'Homme*,  
ii 586; and for the kind of earrings,  
etc., which are worn, *ibid* vol. 1. p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> Hale, i 293, cf. *Acad. d'An*

i 41

<sup>4</sup> De Morgan, vii 412, *L'Homme*,  
ii 582

In spite of this evidence it would, of course, be strange if the Sakai had in no case picked up what is so common a custom of the Malays. But I have not so far found any mention of it by other authors.

Mr. L. Wray, however, writes me that he has seen at least one Sakai woman whose teeth were filed after the manner of the Malays. She was living with a tribe of Sakai near Chenderiang, but as she had once been a slave in a Malay house, it might have been done by Malays. In the same district he saw a woman whose teeth had been blackened.

#### *Other Forms of Initiation.*

There is no record either of circumcision or any kindred rite among the unconverted Sakai.

#### *Scarification and Tattooing.*

**Perak Sakai.**—There appears to be very little evidence of the practice of tattooing proper among the Sakai, beyond Mr. L. Wray's statement already quoted, but De Morgan's account almost certainly holds good at least of the methods adopted for scarification. The same author goes on to explain that the face-marks to which he refers are found among the wilder tribes only, their more civilised kinsmen (who are in closer touch with the Malays), having long discontinued the practice. De Morgan himself observed it (in Perak) among the hill-Sakai of Changkat Kerbu, and also among those of Changkat Gochan,<sup>1</sup> as well as in other places. Baron Miklucho-Maclay, on the other hand, remarks (though in reality he only saw Pangan), that while he saw no "Sakai" or

<sup>1</sup> De M. viii. 225.

Semang men tattooed, he found most of the "Sakai" women so adorned, and always in the same "type." (Fig. re 2, Plate III.) of M. Maclay's article show the arrangement of the simple design with which in childhood they embellish their cheeks and temples. The operation is performed with a needle, and the design is first marked out with resin.<sup>1</sup> Maclay's account certainly describes a method which may refer to regular "tattooing," though we must not be led too hastily to conclude (from the mere fact of a needle being employed) that puncturation, and not scarification, was the method actually practised.

Vaughan-Stevens, again, though he must have had ample opportunities of studying the question, is far too uncertain as an observer for us to feel sure to which process he actually refers. All the information that he gives is contained in the meagre statement that in the case of the Sakai (Senoi), Besis, and Kenaboi the chiefs had the same pattern as the ordinary man, and that the chiefs of the Tembeh had, when their clan-mark(?) was tattooed, a further special tattoo-pattern denoting their rank "tattooed" upon the breast or the arm. They alone were tattooed, whilst to the Negritos (*i.e.* Semang and Pangan) both tattooing and body-paint were unknown.

Of other authorities upon the Sakai of Perak, (1) Hale, though he could hardly have failed to see it, if it was there, unfortunately in his paper makes no reference whatever to the subject.

(2) De la Croix relates that, of some fifteen Sakai women belonging to Kampong Chabang whom he met at Kampong Langkor (S. Kerbu), some of

<sup>1</sup> M. Maclay in *Z. A. F. S., S. B.*, No. 1. But, Palang Sulu did not tattoo or  
2. 1. 21 p. Acc. to *Ann. Mal.* 37, the same. <sup>2</sup> *Z. f. L.*, xvii, 157.

them had lines tattooed<sup>1</sup> upon their cheeks, which he thought might be tribal marks. Two of these lines were parallel, and were drawn from the top of the ear to the nostrils; two more started from the bottom of the ear, and terminated at the corners of the mouth; and besides these there was a small vertical tattoo design between the eyebrows.<sup>2</sup> Some Sakai men from another Sakai village close to Kampong Chabang, had the same tattoo-marks on the face that he had noticed among the women.'

(3) To these may be added the statement of De Morgan, viz., that at Changkat Riam (in the interior of Perak) he "first saw people who were actually tattooed." The tattoo-patterns "of the men were less elegant than those of the women, who were sometimes entirely covered with indelible black lines and red paintings."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, we have the first clear and decisive account from Colonel Low, who remarks that the Malays of Perak divided the Sakai into three classes—the "Tame Sakai," the "Hill Sakai" of Ulu Bertang, and the Alas ("Allas") of Ulu Kinta.' This last tribe differed from the other two in having adopted the custom of . . . tattooing the face and breast by means of a sharp piece of wood, and filling the punctures with the juice of a tree.'

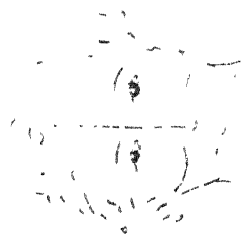
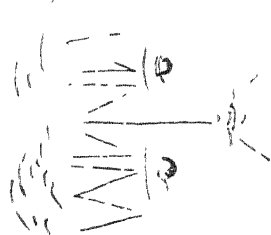
The next really reliable statement upon the subject comes from Mr. L. Wray, who in writing to me recently remarked as follows:— "The Sakai of Perak practise tattooing, the lines being made by

<sup>1</sup> By "tattooed" may be meant "scarified."

<sup>2</sup> De Morgan, p. 336. *Ib.* p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> De Morgan, viii. 211.  
In original "Kantu."

<sup>4</sup> Colonel Low, *J. A. S.* vol. iv. p. 420.  
Mr. Currah has also since written me that the skin is "pricked" with a "bertum" thorn, and powdered charcoal rubbed in.



on a Woman

on a Man

W





pricking the skin with a thorn, and then rubbing in powdered charcoal. I was told by a Malay that a tribe at Sungei Kaya in Kinta employed red lines as well as the bluish ones produced by the charcoal, but he did not know what pigment was used. The lines are mostly to be seen on the face, but sometimes rings are tattooed round the fingers. The marks are usually confined, however, to a few lines on the forehead. A favourite device is a diamond-shaped pattern in the centre, with one or two vertical lines on each side, though often there is only one line, running from the roots of the hair down to the tip of the nose. I enclose some sketches I made in Batang Padang. All were on the forehead where not otherwise shown. The marks do not appear to be tribal, since members of the same family have different designs. I have certainly never seen scarification on a Perak Sakai. Raised cicatrices on the bodies of some of them I have seen, but there was nothing to lead one to suppose they were not the result of accident."

In spite of this apparently strong consensus of evidence, I must still repeat the warning that (although there clearly is some form of real tattooing, *i.e.* skin-puncturation, practised in the Peninsula), yet what many of the observers from whom I have quoted are wont to call tattooing, is certainly no more than scarification, or even perhaps nothing but mere face-paint after all.

### *Body-paint.*

With regard to body-paint, the information to hand is more satisfactory. Its existence among the

Sakai of Perak is noted by Hale, Swettenham, De Morgan, Vaughan-Stevens, and others;<sup>1</sup> and among the Senoi of Pahang by Clifford and Martin. The pigments used agree pretty well, as to the colours used, with those employed by the Semang, but are made of varying materials.

De Morgan states that the Sakai of Changkat Gochan and S. "Krou" (in Perak) used to manufacture their white pigment from lime obtained from the shells of the *Melania*, and that they usually applied the product thus obtained in a circular stripe on the right cheek.<sup>2</sup> When black, the pigment is obtained from charcoal, when red, from the fruit of the anatto or *Bixa orillana*, which is cultivated for the purpose.\*

The anatto (Mal. "kāsumba"), however, being of modern introduction, cannot have been the original object from which the red pigment was obtained, and there is accordingly some question as to what substance may have preceded it. Vaughan-Stevens describes it, somewhat vaguely and from tradition only, as a species of red earth, but in his *Cave-dwellers of Perak* Wray refers to the apparent use of hematite in this way, and there can I think be very little doubt that this conjecture is correct, and that a species of red ochre, obtained from some of the numerous forms of iron-ore so widely distributed in the Peninsula, originally formed the red pigment of the Sakai. Hematite does in fact to this day form a very popular

<sup>1</sup> De Morgan viii 241, Swett p 225 Hale, p 243

<sup>2</sup> De Morgan viii 225

(p Wray's (C. I. I. p 43 for an almost identical statement

"The three colours used by the modern Sakai for painting their persons are

clay, oil, a vegetable red, and white crin clay. These are mixed with oil, and the faces, and sometimes the breasts of women, and occasionally the men, are painted with patterns with lines and dots. This is only done on occasions when they wish to add to their charms."





SALA CHILD HAVING FACE PAINT APPLIED



The tradition of this tribe is very vague, yet it is agreed that they lived for a long time separated from the other branches of the tribe. It appears that during this interval they learnt "tattooing" from another race, and afterwards substituted face paint for "tattooing".<sup>1</sup>

For each of the three tribes (Sen oi, Besisi, and Kenabori) there existed a particular pattern, which was identical as regards the design and the materials employed, but which varied in form. In each of the three tribes one and the same tribe sign served for all the members of the tribe, from the chief downwards. Only among the Sen oi there was a special breast pattern both for men and women. Moreover, among the Sen oi, too, the magician, the midwife, and their patients were excepted from the rule. Thus the following rules became established —

(1) The magician or medicine man in each of the three tribes wore, during an exorcism, paint suitable for the occasion, at other times he wore his ordinary paint, each of the three tribes having a special one for the purpose.

(2) So, too, the midwives wore a special face paint whilst in discharge of their office, but at other times the usual one of their tribe.

On the other hand, the midwives of all three tribes wore, whilst in discharge of their office, one and the same pattern.

(3) The young mother and her new-born child each wore, according to the day and the condition of their health, a series of face paint, which in the case of all three races was the same.

The three curves on the cheeks of the Besisi are only variants of the ancient tribal mark of the Besisi and Sen oi, which consisted of three stripes.

The magicians constructed variants from the old pattern of the Besisi which corresponds to the present Sen oi pattern (No. 9), only the Sakui (Sen oi) pattern lacked the stripe which goes from the under lip to the chin.

The Sen oi magicians afterwards added this stripe to the old pattern (No. 9). The Besisi then went further and chose the tiger pattern (No. 5), whilst the Kenabori took the three curves worn by the laymen of the mother tribe (No. 1), and applied two of them in front and over the third, which remained in the old position that it had among the Sakui (No. 8).

The patterns of the medicine men (sorcerers) were only put on when they were in office, on every other occasion they wore the painting of the lay members.

In the case of the Sen oi, Besisi, and Kenabori the chiefs wore the same pattern as the ordinary man, but the chiefs of the Tumbuk wore, since their clan mark was "tattooed," a special tattoo design in addition, to denote their rank, punctured in the breast or the arm. They alone were "tattooed."

The Sen oi magicians wore no breast pattern, neither did the midwife nor the new made mother.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the above information, Vaughan-Stevens procured drawings of the following patterns. —

(1) Pattern of a Kenaburi man: three narrow black stripes on white ground — a variant of the three red stripes of the Sakui man pattern (No. 8).

(2) Pattern of a Besisi man and woman.

(3) Pattern of a Kenaburi magician (as well as that of a Sen oi).

(4) Face patterns of children of all three tribes, etc., etc.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. I.* xxxi, 150.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. also *L'Homme*, II, 555.

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FACE PAINT OF A SAKAI<sup>1</sup> WOMAN

With regard to the five streaks which the face paint of the Sakai women shows in contradistinction to the three streaks of the men, there is a tradition explaining this difference.<sup>2</sup>

The breast paint of a Sakai woman may be applied by the mother, but only after the midwife has given up her charge, generally speaking, the children—whether boys or girls, often wear till marriage the red stripes with which they paint themselves, often with the help of a mirror obtained by barter, though they may not apply the black streaks and white dots themselves.

As regards the breast paint of the Sakai women, it should be mentioned that the streak running downwards is generally carried yet further down, so as to follow the natural development of the breast. The pattern represents the same fern as the pattern of the men.<sup>3</sup>

Old women, who are past child-bearing, omit the lower stripe running from the under lip to the cheek, as well as the breast paint, since these designs in present hope of children.

The different facial pattern of the midwife—who is always an old woman—was invented because, “although she is old she is always seeing to children.”

## FACE PAINT OF A YOUNG MOTHER

A Sakai woman who has just brought forth a child paints her face every day, commencing from the child's birthday, until one lunar month be past. If the moon is invisible, the days are counted approximately. Whenever a Sakai mother applies the particular pattern designated for this purpose, the breast paint appropriate to a Sakai woman is omitted.

## FACE PAINT OF A MIDWIFE

A Sakai midwife paints her face when she awakes from sleep just as do the new male mother whom she is tending, the time during which her services are required being usually three or five days. On every other occasion a midwife bears the face paint of her tribe, only that she omits the breast paint as soon as she enters on her functions as midwife.

When another woman—not a midwife by profession, helps during a confinement she too put on the face paint of a midwife, so long as she is discharging a midwife's functions, but as soon as her help is no longer required, she again takes on the full paint of the woman.

The Sakai women are the only ones that paint the breast.<sup>4</sup>

## FACE PAINT OF CHILDREN

The pattern of the children—which were stripes carried from the eyebrows to the tip of the nose—black in the case of girls and in that of boys—in the latter case the two red stripes running from the under lip to the chin—were applied by the midwife only as soon as the child was born, so long as the midwife was in attendance the painting was renewed every seven days, but it ceased as soon as she went away. The mother could then if she wished, apply the ordinary tribal pattern with a variation of the black nose line in the case of a girl.<sup>5</sup>

The children may not wear the narrow black lines till they are married—through marriage according to ancient custom, the youth becomes a man—for the children might become unlucky should they pluck up the ferns along with other

<sup>1</sup> See note in original

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p. 155

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *JfE* xxvi 154

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* p. 158

Elsewhere (in his description of the "tāng tang" or tunting ceremony) Vaughan-Stevens writes of the Siku (Blind) as follow-

I have been thinking of you very much lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on. I hope  
 you are well and happy. I have been very busy  
 lately but I will try to write to you more often.  
 I have been thinking of you very much lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on. I hope  
 you are well and happy. I have been very busy  
 lately but I will try to write to you more often.  
 I have been thinking of you very much lately  
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[illegible]

The men have nothing to do with the Hantu Darah,<sup>1</sup> and say, "We know nothing about it, ask the *sage-femme*." Even the magicians, who are responsible for all other medicines which the latter employs against the demons, would not acknowledge this antidote against the Blood Demon. No Sakai man will touch this receptacle ("chit-nât"), which is usually kept planted in the ground by the waterside. It can be made very quickly when required, and the pattern is very quickly washed off by the rain. They have no great objection to the "chit-nât" being seen by strangers.<sup>2</sup>

Unmarried Sakai girls employ for their purification a water-vessel called "kâ-pet" ("karpet"). Since these vessels, in order to be fully efficacious, should have been incised by a magician of the old school, they are only found among the wild Sakai tribes who do not speak Malay.<sup>3</sup>

### III.—JAKUN.

- **Besisi.**—I never once heard of a single case of tattooing, scarification, nose-boring, circumcision, or even of incision, being practised by the Besisi, although I made the fullest inquiries among them.

They related to me, on the other hand, a tradition explaining their reason for not adopting the practice

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Blood Demon" = Malay "Hantu Darah."

<sup>2</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 172. Bartels adds that the painting is performed with the instruments used for severing the umbilical cord. The ornamentation of the other "chit-nâts," of which more will be said later, is the exclusive privilege of the magicians, who employ in making them a special kind of instrument, closely resembling a curvy-comb. They are cut out of a flat piece of horn (Fig. 2), and have a hole at the top for suspending them when they are being carried. They broaden out towards the bottom, and their lower edge is furnished with rough, tooth-like projections. The greatest width of the larger one is 5.3 cm., and its height is 5 cm.; the smaller one being 3.5 cm. by 4.6 cm.

<sup>3</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 173, 174. Bartels adds here that Vaughan-Stevens has sent two specimens of this vessel, one of them (Fig. 3) being obtained from the Senoi (pure Sakai tribes), and the other (Fig. 4) from the Kenaboi. The

former is a short segment of the stem of a bamboo cut short just below a particular internode (at the top), and again just below the next, so that the vessel thus formed is open at the top and closed at the bottom. It measures 28 cm. in length, and 13 in circumference, and its surface is decorated by three narrow parallel stripes formed by a kind of leaf-pattern. The second is like the first, a simple segment of bamboo measuring 39.5 cm. in length by 17.1 cm. in circumference. It is also decorated with three stripes, of which only two, however, are formed by the leaf-pattern, the third apparently representing a downy leaf-stalk. The design represents a plant whose root-end is shown near the mouth-opening of the vessel. The discrepancy in the designs shows that a design does not lose its efficacy through slight mistakes of the operator, such as may be caused by hurry, even though the identification and explanation of the pattern may be made much harder through such slips, if not absolutely impossible.

of circumcision, which they ascribed to the irreducibility of one of their tribal ancestors.

Ear-loring, on the other hand was, as among the Malays, freely practised, the stalk of a flower, such as the fragrant "champaka," being not infrequently inserted in the perforation.

Face-paint, however, was very generally employed by them, and the pigments used for it appeared to be in the main identical with those adopted by the Semang and Sakai, *i.e.* white, obtained from lime; yellow, obtained from turmeric; and red, obtained from the juice of the anatto.

The only form of paint that I have myself seen among the Besis consisted in daubing the face with the aforesaid pigments (white, yellow, or red), these being manufactured, in addition to the usual materials, from such others (*e.g.* "bēdak" or rice-powder) as the growing familiarity of the Besis with Malay civilisation might suggest. No special pattern was employed by them, and I never saw any distinct traces of the elaborate system of body-paint described by Vaughan-Stevens. The latter, however, as usual, gives no localities or any other facilities for checking his statements, and I can only suggest that he probably got his ideas about the Besis from some other tribe in their neighbourhood with whom there had been more Sakai admixture.

I give his account, nevertheless, for what it may be worth, in the hope that it may assist some future investigator to work out the subject more completely in the future.

It runs as follows:<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup>The Besis again put on a pattern borrowed from the leaf of the "chindweh mimia," or "tiger chindweh," which is a small, juicy forest plant

not yet fully identified. When rubbed to a pulp and smeared on the body, especially the breast, it is believed to give a man the power to overcome a tiger.

The fresh leaf with its peculiar markings gives an exact replica of the face-paint of a Besisi magician. The veining on the upper side of the leaf is of such a pale yellowish-green that it almost has the effect of white, and thus forms a sharp contrast to the very dark greenish-gold stripes of the leaf.

No one leaf is marked exactly like another. The patterns are manifold; in some cases stripes traverse the entire leaf. In a good light the ground colour of the leaf appears, as has been said, of a greenish-gold, but on the under side of the leaf the corresponding parts appear a dark reddish-brown; held up to the light the green of the upper side merges into the reddish-brown.

The under side of the leaf is very soft and smooth, but the upper side is plentifully covered with very fine hairs.

The dark reddish-brown lines which glimmer through from the under side correspond in fact to the red and black of the face-paint designed for the tiger in conjuration ceremonies, and at the same time to the recognised face-paint of the Besisi.

These stripes are said to correspond to the stripes on the skin of the tiger, the red colour not being distinguished from yellow.<sup>1</sup>

**Mantra.**—There is very little information on the subject of maturity customs available with regard to the Mantra of Malacca. Logan, however, records the fact that the teeth of the bride and bridegroom were filed with a stone before the day of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

Montano states that the Mantra (Sakai) usually file the lower edge of the upper canine teeth, but does not connect it with any ceremony.<sup>3</sup>

**Jakun of Johor.**—D. F. A. Hervey, in writing of the Jakun on the Madek, says that one chief characteristic which distinguished the Madek tribe from other Jakun tribes was the absence of any rite resembling circumcision; whilst the Sembrong tribe practised incision, but did not circumcise.<sup>4</sup> The Madek people, however, relate that they used once to observe the custom, but it was given up owing to certain untoward circumstances, which befell the tribe two or three hundred years ago, as follows: on one occasion when the rite was observed, several of the

<sup>1</sup> *L. f. E.* xxvi. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Logan in *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 323\*.

<sup>3</sup> *Rev. d'Ethn.* i. 44.

<sup>4</sup> A. D. Machado tells me that incision is still practised among the Jakun of Ulu Batu Pahat, in Johor.

tribe died of the effects. It was ascertained that the knives used for the purpose had been accidentally placed in a vessel containing upas poison ("ipoh"), the poison with which their blowpipe arrows are habitually tipped; and from that time forward the observance of the rite was discontinued.<sup>1</sup>

Corroboration of the foregoing account may be obtained from the statement of Logan, who in writing of the Benua (or Jakun) of Johor, remarks that circumcision was not practised by them. A single incision or slit was made by the Benua, but not by the Berembun tribes.<sup>2</sup>

Names were sometimes given at birth, but these were changed at the age of puberty. The teeth were filed like those of the Malays and the Berembun tribes.<sup>3</sup>

### ORANG LAUT OR SEA-JAKUN.

**Orang Laut, S'letar.**—Of the Orang S'letar we are informed by Thomson that they did not practise circumcision, nor any other Mohammedan customs. It was, moreover, related to Thomson that many years ago when they had a Malay as their great chief or Batin, all the men now of the tribe were induced to undergo the rite of circumcision, though such a practice was no longer conformed with.<sup>4</sup> This is probably a reference to some such story as that related above by Hervey.

**Orang Laut, Sabimba.**—Of this Orang Laut tribe we are told that they were not in the habit of filing

<sup>1</sup> Hervey in *J. R. A. S.*, No. 8, pp. 118, 119; cp. p. 544, *anti*.

<sup>2</sup> Logan in *J. L. A.* vol. i. p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> According to Vaughan-Stevens, the Jakun used to blacken their teeth,

but this was probably a borrowed custom. Ear-boring was rarely practised by the men, and the lips and nose were never pierced (*Z. f. E.* xvix. 180).

<sup>4</sup> *J. L. A.* vol. i. p. 344\*.

their teeth, and that the practice of perforating the lobe of the ear was equally unknown to them.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, we are informed (of the same tribe) that they did not practise the rites either of circumcision or incision.<sup>2</sup>

**Orang Laut (no locality specified).**—To the foregoing may be added an account given by Vaughan-Stevens<sup>3</sup> of certain Orang Laut customs which he does not attribute to any particular tribe:—

Among the Orang Laut a woman during menstruation was, theoretically at all events, treated as unclean, though in practice it made no appreciable difference.

The women alleged a belief on the part of the men that if they were to touch a woman in such a condition, their virility would suffer. The men themselves, however, would make no admissions, and in practice, as I have said, little notice of it was taken.

Nevertheless, a woman in the condition referred to would avoid touching anything that a man might eat afterwards; it was, however, considered a sufficient purification to peel any roots which were supposed to have been thus defiled. On such occasions the wife would avoid cohabitation and sleep as far away from her husband as possible.

She would, moreover, avoid dipping her drinking bamboo in the common water-pot, but would dip it into a drinking-shell of her own, which she would keep separately, or else into a vessel made of a short segment of bamboo.

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<sup>1</sup> *J. I. I.* vol. i. p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 344\*.

<sup>3</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 171.

## CHAPTER III.

### MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

AMONG all the wild tribes of the Peninsula, as indeed among the Malays, an important ingredient of the marriage rite is a form of ritual purchase, commonly followed by a repast which is shared between bride and bridegroom, with their relatives and the chief of the tribe as witnesses.

Among the Negritos these two ingredients appear to constitute the entire ceremony, though even the act of purchase alone is said to be regarded as sufficiently binding, so long as it is performed before proper witnesses. It must not, however, be supposed from the meagreness of the ceremony that the marriage tie is not regarded by the Semang as in the highest degree binding, the reverse being the case. The Semang are, as far as I could learn, habitually monogamists, and I failed to obtain any sort of evidence in support of the statement that has been more than once advanced, viz., that their women were in common like their other property.<sup>1</sup> This idea of the laxity of the marriage-tie among the Negritos may possibly

<sup>1</sup> Similarly erroneous notions as to polyandry among the Andamanese were combated in Man's *Andamanese*, p. 71. As regards polygamy, on the other hand, the teachings of actual experience, supported by what we see in India, Egypt, the Malay Peninsula, and,

indeed, in all Mohammedan countries, tell us that a lord of the harem can only exist in cases where there is wealth to maintain such an establishment; jungle races and the races who live the simplest lives are commonly, from the exigencies of the case, monogamists.



arise from the great antenuptial freedom which appears to be allowed, but there is every reason to believe that when once married the Semang of both sexes are in the highest degree faithful to each other and that cases of unfaithfulness are exceedingly rare. That conjugal infidelity is strongly discountenanced is shown by the penalty assigned to it.

With regard to the Sakai, there seems to be a certain amount of evidence in favour of their being to a limited extent polygamists, though here again our information is too scanty to enable us to form an opinion as to how far the custom is general. On the other hand, with regard to the actual ceremony, the most important elements, according to one authority,<sup>1</sup> are the painting of the man's face and the squirting of fern-seed over the bride and bridegroom, as a means of ensuring them a numerous progeny.

I may add that among the Sakai marriage is preceded by a form of initiation, at which the man's face-paint is applied for the first time.

Miklucho-Maclay heard from Malays and members of the Catholic Mission at Malacca that communal marriage existed among the Sakai (*sic*, ? Mantra). Some days or weeks after marriage the girl was said to leave her husband with his consent and take up with the men of his family in turn. She then came back to her husband, but kept up these irregular liaisons, which were regulated by chance and her own wishes.<sup>2</sup>

The Jakun or Malayan tribes again (including the Blandas and Besis of Selangor), are as a rule fairly strict monogamists, and their post-matrimonial fidelity,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 64, *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> *J. R. A. S., S. B.*, No. 2, p. 215. This is, however, the only notice of

such a custom, and resting as it does on second-hand evidence or worse, cannot be accepted without due corroboration.

while it varies in degree apparently from tribe to tribe, is certainly remarkable, although in their case, too, it appears to be considered compatible with considerable freedom before marriage.

Of the Jakun ceremonies, that of eating together from the same dish is one which is found throughout South-eastern Asia. But the most remarkable part of all these customs are the Jakun (*i.e.* Malayan) "marriage carnival" and the unique race round the mound or "ant hill," for which, among some branches of the Sea Tribes, a race in canoes is sometimes substituted.

The peculiar shape of the mound, which has come down from an entirely unknown origin, may perhaps be held to show that the mound ceremony is the older form of this peculiar rite, but in any case we have here a custom which will assuredly repay any student of ethnography who decides to work out the entire question for himself.

The effect of intermarriage between Malays and aboriginal women is one which at first would hardly be expected, *viz.*, that it is the higher race the Malay—that is chiefly affected by it. This fact, however strange it may seem, is clearly brought out by Logan, who, in writing of the Benuea, observes that many of the Malays had Benuea wives, who of course became converts to Islam. The Benuea on their part were debarred from seeking wives amongst the Malays, and this must always have had considerable influence in checking the natural growth of population. The first Malay adventurers were probably more numerous in males than females. In many places the Chinese tend to absorb the Malays in their turn. The more civilised and wealthy races thin those below them of their women, and necessity drives the latter to make

up the loss wherever it is possible to do so, in some measure at the expense of those still lower. This is one of those fundamental facts of ethnography which should be borne in mind in speculating on the gradual extinction of aboriginal races, when comparatively civilised colonies come into contact with them. A considerable proportion of the Malays in the Peninsula behind Malacca are descendants of women of the aboriginal tribes, and the Malays in their turn gave wives to the immigrants from China, so that the greater portion of the Chinese of Malacca have "Malayan blood in their veins."<sup>1</sup>

#### I.—SEMANG.

**Pangan.**—I have never met with any published account of a Semang wedding, but while in Kelantan I acquired some information about the marriage rites of the Eastern Semang in the Belimbing district.

The "marriage settlements," according to my informants, consisted of the blade of a jungle-knife or chopper, which had to be presented by the bridegroom to the bride's parents, and a coiled girdle of great length called "salek," that was said to be manufactured from the fibres of the sugar-palm ("urat hijok"), but that doubtless more or less closely resembled the girdle of rock-vein fungus, which has been described in an earlier chapter. This girdle had to be presented by the bridegroom to the bride, who would never, it was said, consent to part with it for fear of its being used to her prejudice in some magic ceremony.

There was also a good deal of chaunting ("siwang" or "bĕr-siwang" = invocation of spirits) at these

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<sup>1</sup> Logan in *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 291.

Pangan marriages, but beyond this no further information was obtainable.

**Kedah Semang.**—Later on I was informed by the Semang of Kedah that adultery was punishable by death (although in practice it might be commuted for the usual blood-fine of forty dollars). This fine, however, was payable in kind, and would doubtless in practice be adjusted to the means of the culprit.

The only information I have met with in regard to the married life of the Semang, is Newbold's observation to the effect that the Semang women were in common like their other property.<sup>1</sup>

What truth there may be in this sweeping statement it is very hard to say, though from what I saw and heard of their domestic life I find it most difficult to believe (with regard to the Semang of Kedah at all events), that the charge was well founded.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, as has been remarked above, it appears quite incompatible with so severe a punishment for adultery as was exacted by the customs of this very tribe.

**Perak Semang.**—To the foregoing may be added the following notes of Vaughan-Stevens on the Semang of Perak :

When a Semang commits adultery with the wife of another (which very rarely happens), and the fact remains concealed until the death of the injured husband, the latter's soul acquires knowledge of the offence, and seeks to revenge it on the children of the transgressor, by sending a Disease upon them. In such cases the Disease (the same that had killed the man) attacks the children independently of Kuli's commands.<sup>3</sup>

In order to avert this danger, the transgressor, as soon as he hears of the husband's death, takes the children by the arms and swings them through the fire, at the same time "jumping" them up and down upon the charred wood so as to blacken the soles of their feet, by way of protecting them. If the Disease comes afterwards when the child has been replaced upon the ground, the child remains unharmed. Even if the child were somewhat affected before being swung through the fire, the Disease is yet forced to retire in order to escape

<sup>1</sup> Newbold, ii. pp. 379-381. Cp., however, *I.I.* ii. 558, where the men are credited with polygamy.

<sup>2</sup> Vaughan-Stevens in *L. E. F.*

xxviii. 166, observes that in their (good) treatment of their women, the Semang ranked next to the Sakai.

<sup>3</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 132.

being burnt, and as long as the soles of the child's feet remain so blackened, the Disease is prevented from returning. Moreover, the Disease cannot in any case kill the child without Karib's command; nor can it, in any case, make a long stay, since it has to be back with the Death-messenger beside the corpse, as soon as ever the "Pënitâh" is cut. The children are only attacked as a means of bringing the transgressor to justice, by attracting the superior chief's (the Putto's) attention, either from the children's getting the same Disease as the husband or from the transgressor's betraying himself by swinging them through the fire. The superior chief, in such cases, pronounces the penalty.<sup>1</sup>

By the same writer we are told that—

The Semang have an aphrodisiac called "chin-weh" or "chindweh" (= "chinduai").<sup>2</sup> This name is probably borrowed from the Sakai, but as the plant used in this case is altogether a different one and is not employed by other magicians, it may be regarded as a discovery of their own.<sup>3</sup>

## II.—SAKAI.

**Pérak Sakai.**—De Morgan, in his account of Sakai marriage customs,<sup>4</sup> remarks that the conditions required for marriage were few. In the first place, there was no fixed limit of age. The consent of the woman was required, together with that of her father (if living), but if otherwise, that of the eldest surviving member of the family. The future husband made the application in person with the consent of the father. The wife brought no dowry to her bridegroom, but the latter made a present to his prospective father-in-law of certain specified articles, *e.g.* a knife or hatchet or yams, "according to his means."<sup>5</sup> Commenting on the foregoing, De Morgan remarks that it might be

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, iii. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Z. f. E.* xviii. 183.

<sup>3</sup> *V. B. G. A.* xxiv. 468.

<sup>4</sup> De Morgan, vii. 422.

<sup>5</sup> According to Maxwell (*J. R. A. S.*, S.B., No. 1, p. 112) the price paid for a wife included a "piece of iron, some roots, and some flowers." According to Hale (p. 291) the presents consisted of "sarongs," or bill-hooks ("parangs"), purchased from Malays, or the bridegroom might clear one or two acres of jungle, plant them with tapioca, sugarcane, etc., and present them to the parents of the bride. According to Brau de St. Pol Lias (pp. 279, 280) the hus-

band generally paid ten dollars ("ringgit") = 50 francs to the father; a chief paid up to thirty dollars; but M. Lias adds that "this was the highest price, and that it appeared to him the biggest sum of money that the Sakai, even those educated by contact with the Malays, could conceive." The sums mentioned were doubtless paid in kind, but even then there is, I think, little doubt that this last figure (as M. Lias himself seems to have inferred) was exaggerated, perhaps for "swagger," owing to the presence of the Malays that he had brought with him. The nominal price of a Sakai wife, among

called an example of marriage by purchase, but that the fact of purchase is to some extent modified by the smallness of the price paid, and that all that actually remains is a purely formal substitute for marriage by purchase, which was once a wide-spread custom in Southern Asia. Continuing, De Morgan adds that the form of marriage was extremely simple. The bride and bridegroom repaired, accompanied by their relatives, to the house of their tribal chief, where the latter in converse with the two families inquired into the prospects of the joint *ménage*, after which, if no obstacle presented itself, he formally declared them married, and all was over.<sup>1</sup> The newly married pair were required to build a hut and form a clearing, and in the interval that must elapse before it could bring them in a return, they lived at the charge of their families, who provided them with yams and maize, and everything else that they might require for their maintenance.

An account of the Perak Sakai by Colonel Low, in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, gives the details of the religious ceremony, which are omitted in De Morgan's description : -

A young Sakai man pays his addresses in person. If the girl approves, he makes a present to her family of spears, knives, and household utensils, and a time being fixed, the relations of both sides assemble at the bride's house. The betrothed parties eat rice together out of the same dish, and the little finger of the right hand of the man is joined

the Sakai themselves, cannot be greater than about the value of ten dollars paid in kind, for the simple reason that no ordinary Sakai bridegroom would have more property than this to pay with. Cp. also Vaughan-Stevens in

*Z. f. E.* xxviii. 177.

<sup>1</sup> De Morgan adds (*ib. cit.*) that there was "no religious ceremony"; but as will appear from the next account, this statement of his is certainly mistaken.

to that of the left hand of the woman. These two last observances are found with some slight modifications amongst the Malays on like occasions. The eating together is also a Burmese and Peguan custom.

The parents on both sides then pronounce them married persons, and give them good advice for their future conduct. As an example of the actual words used, Col. Low gives the expression "Mano klamin che dada," an admonition or wish that they might be fruitful.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear from some accounts that the Sakai men occasionally take more than one wife. Thus De la Croix says that a Sakai married, or rather bought, a wife, or even two, if he were rich enough.<sup>2</sup>

#### MARRIAGE AND [ALLEGED] TOTEMISM

According to Vaughan Stevens, the Sakai (whom he calls "Senoi"), Besisi, and Kenaboi, were sub tribes of one single people, which also included at a more remote date the Tembeh and Jakun. Each of these three sub tribes was divided into clans,<sup>3</sup> distinguished by the pattern of the face-paint (termed by Vaughan Stevens "totems")<sup>4</sup>. The Thorn, Tiger, Snake, Fish, and Leaf totems were the primary ones. In the course of time, the components of the tribes becoming widely scattered, new settlements sprang up in various parts of the Peninsula, and it became the practice for each local group to adopt some variant of the totem mark and house. Thus, among the sub-clans of the Snake totem, were Pythons, Cobras, Hamadryads, etc.<sup>5</sup>

In the olden days intermarriage between the clans was forbidden. The penalty for disobedience was expulsion from the clan. The people thus expelled formed new clans (Musing or Civet cat, Crocodile, Scorpion). A member of the primary clans who married into one of these secondary clans lost his status in his old clan, and became a member of his spouse's clan. With the rise of sub-clans these quasi endogamic rules do not seem to have been changed, choice was not restricted to the members of the sub-clan. No definite information is given

<sup>1</sup> *J I 4* vol iv pp 430 431  
According to Cerruti, the Sakai marriage season was at the opening of the "prah" fruit

<sup>2</sup> *Rev d'Ethn* vol i No 4, p 339 Cp Bruu de St P Lins, pp 279, 280 "a Sakai marries two wives"

<sup>3</sup> Apparently forming local groups  
*J F* xxvi 160

<sup>4</sup> *J F E* xxvi 150, 151 [I owe this summary of Sakai marriage and totemism to my friend, Mr N W

Thomas, who has made totemism his special study — W S ] The account is confused, the editor has not distinguished tribe from clan, and speaks in one place of the totem mark as a tribal pattern. It is stated that the clan patterns went out of use owing to the scattering of the members of the tribe, and were replaced by the sub-clan patterns. Of the origin of the clans nothing is said — N W I *Sed. ant.* p 32, *et infra* 255, and cp Martin, 863

<sup>5</sup> *J F E* xxvi 150, 151





narrative, present-day facts, and inferences, seem hopelessly and indistinguishably intermingled.

Elsewhere Vaughan-Stevens gives the story of twins who married the same woman. Their "totems" were "musang" and "palm-leaf," and their child should have followed the father's "totem," but this being uncertain, it was given a new "musang" totem. It is not clear that the twins were children of a Batin.<sup>1</sup>

Again, the breast-paint of a Sakai (Sen-oi) man represented a fern (a sort of polypodium). The fronds of this fern being bruised in water and squirted over the bride and bridegroom at marriage assured the pair many children. The dots and lines of the face-paint represented another fern, with the juice of which the youth was sprinkled before he became man and might marry.

The face-paint of the Sakai man consisted of three lines or stripes, whereas that of the woman consisted of five.<sup>2</sup>

The tiger and "musang" patterns represented these animals, but are now only used as blowpipe marks. Formerly they were patterns for face-paint.<sup>3</sup>

Yet in *Z. f. E.* xxvi. 150, the face patterns are spoken of by Vaughan-Stevens as being all of one type.

With regard to the age of the contracting parties, M. Frau de St. P. Lias states that the women were often married when mere children.<sup>4</sup>

In the account by Colonel Low, from which I have already quoted, we are further told that polygamy was permitted among the Sakai, but was not common, and that the men seemed to care little about their wives leaving them.

The men appeared, nevertheless, to treat them well. But should a man choose to resent the infidelity of his wife, he might kill her and her paramour without any fear of the result, further than the possibility of their relatives avenging the deed.<sup>5</sup>

To this we may add the fuller account given by De Morgan, who tells us that the husband acquired absolute power over his wife, and would not shrink from beating her if the provocation were great

<sup>1</sup> *Ethnos. Notizblatt*, i. 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxvi. 154. Mr. H. N. Ridley (of Singapore) suggests that these alleged fern-spores (as represented in the face-paint of the Sakai) are more probably copied from the black and white fruit-seeds which are found in the Sakai necklaces and armlets. They are probably not meant for fern-seeds or spor-

angia, as these latter would not only be rather brown than black, but would be of a uniform colour. <sup>3</sup> *Notizblatt*, i. 4-6.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Vaughan-Stevens in *Z. f. E.* xviii. 174, where we are told that the age among the Sakai was fourteen for the girl and from fifteen to sixteen for the man.

<sup>5</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. iv. pp. 430, 431.

enough. A form of divorce was allowed among the Sakai, the reasons for which it was permitted being, in the case of the husband, grave misconduct, such cases being settled by a fine, or separation, the woman keeping the children. In the case of the wife, a refusal to take her proper share in house-keeping, planting, hunting, and other tasks necessarily incidental to her position, was regarded as a reason. The aggrieved husband, in the latter case, lodged a complaint with the tribal chief, who communicated it to the woman's family; if no good results followed, he insisted on separation, sending the woman back to her own family, but always, however, retaining the custody of the children—a point of great importance among these tribes where children were regarded as a source of profit, the possession of children actually making his re-marriage easier.<sup>1</sup> The paternal authority ordinarily lasted during the father's lifetime, but otherwise ceased as soon as a married child left its father's roof. The adoption of orphan children by childless people was also occasionally practised.<sup>2</sup>

We are told by Maxwell (in his account of the Perak tribes) that the punishment for adultery was death, and that it was usually carried out by a relative, who invited his victim to a hunting excursion, and after tiring him out, beat his brains out with a club while he was asleep, and left him to rot upon the earth, denying to his remains even the rough sepulture given to those who died in an honourable way.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Divorce was permitted by the Sakai, but was extremely rare among them. Adultery was regarded as a very serious crime ('salahi besat'), the tribe would meet, and often gave rise to a fight. The guilty parties were made to pay a fine to the husband, which generally

amounted to thirty dollars each, the woman's fine being paid by her father or brothers." Brau de St. P. Laos, pp. 270, 280. — De Morgan, vii, 422.

<sup>2</sup> Maxwell in *J.R. L.S., S.B.*, No. 1, pp. 111, 112. It should be noted that Maxwell in his account, which is

A different account of the method adopted by the outraged husband for the punishment of the guilty parties is given by Vaughan-Stevens as follows:—

The punishment prescribed by the Sakai for the adultery of a wife was very seldom really carried out. The husband, however, if he wished to enforce it, would bind his guilty wife hand and foot and lay her down upon the ground at a short distance from his hut. He then armed himself with three wooden spears of bamboo or palm-wood ("nibong"), and took up his station among the brush-wood in the vicinity. The woman was allowed neither food nor water, but was kept there perforce until she died either from the bites of ants or from exhaustion. Meanwhile, however, her paramour was expected to wait for an opportunity to cut through her bonds and take her back to her husband's house. The husband, on the other hand, was allowed from his concealment to launch each of his three spears once at his rival. If he succeeded in killing him, he might if he pleased let his wife lie there till she died, or else if he were now more inclined to mercy, he might release her and send her away. If, on the other hand, her paramour's attempt succeeded, the husband could take no further steps, though he could if he desired send away his wife when her paramour had brought her back to the hut. If, on the other hand, the paramour refused to make the attempt, the husband might bring him up before the chief for punishment, in which case the husband himself was allowed to name the penalty. He applied in such cases to one of the subordinate chiefs, who could apply to the Batin for confirmation of the sentence, if he considered it just. He need not, however, do so if four of the older men advised him that the punishment was excessive.<sup>1</sup>

The Batin had the power of delaying the proceedings by postponing the sentence for an indefinite period. Nevertheless private quarrels, ending in wounds or death, frequently arose from cases which had been postponed on account of some mitigating circumstance, which limited the penalty to be paid to public discussion of the case.<sup>2</sup>

A wife could not bring her offending husband to the Batin for punishment, since he need only announce that conjugal rights had been intentionally withheld from him, to obtain condonation of his infidelity, and a separation could then be obtained at his own instance. In former days, before the present intercourse with the Malays, divorce was not regarded with such indifference as nowadays, but was highly disapproved of and very seldom actually occurred. Moreover, a man would not put away his wife when he was sure both of losing his children and of having much trouble to come by another wife. But when a woman absconded from her husband, and after the lapse of a month, he did not think it proper to take her back, whether on account of her laziness, or her clumsiness, or her evil temper, both parties in that case were regarded as free, and were allowed to remarry at will. The husband, however, in this case had the right of returning the children, and of making them work for him.<sup>3</sup>

otherwise sufficiently accurate, confuses the Sakai with the Samung—a confusion of which, however, he is by no means alone guilty.

<sup>1</sup> *L. J. F.* XXVIII. 179.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 180. In a letter just received, Dr. Lurinc says: "Among the Sakai of Bertang, in Peiak, the punishment for adultery is a fine of \$50.50, unless the woman wishes to

follow her paramour, when the latter has to pay \$25, or unless the woman is a chief's wife, when \$25 may be the minimum. Children may follow either parent by choice, but usually prefer to follow the father. Misconduct of a man with his brother's wife would produce a quarrel, but not necessarily entail a fine. Wives are generally chosen within the tribe."

Before leaving this subject, mention should be made of the account given by Vaughan-Stevens of Sakai love-philtres, which runs as follows :

"A thick fleshy cylinder, divided into several sections, each section being a single leaf, or 'flower-leaf,' then appears; its colour being black, variegated with spots of peculiar shade, from dark brown to purple."—*Proc. Zool. Acclimat. Soc.* vol. vi. p. 16.

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The specimen was obtained by a Malay woman, who was very difficult to get to give a specimen. The Sakai women, however, knew the plant, and when asked they pointed to the plant.

Even in the present day only the margins of the plant are used for the purpose, which was used for great rarity. From one specimen, a Malay woman obtained his specimen. In order to ensure its purity, on the day of the festival, the plant was crushed into water, which was then used for the purpose. By Sakai and Malay women, who employed it.

The Sakai women did not employ it in a specimen which was believed to contain a variety of the men. For this purpose they took the "sugarcane" (the plant) and a kind of wood (the plant) and burnt it in the fire until it was burnt. At the same time they burnt a small piece of cloth which had been used for the purpose, and the ash of the two were mixed together. A Malay woman succeeded in introducing these ashes into the food of her intended victim, the latter was believed to have lost his virility for ever.

**Selangor Sakai.**—The late Mr. J. A. G. Campbell of Selangor, in writing of the wedding customs of the Ulu Langat Sakai, describes a peculiar ceremony, which must be very trying to a nervous bridegroom.

Their marriage ceremonies (he says) were very simple; one custom was for the relations on both sides to sit on the ground round an ant-heap, and for the bride or her father to question the bridegroom as follows :

"*What is your name?*"

For is (p. 27) remark that "the plant is a kind of wood, a Vaughan-Stevens, however, appears, the Rafflesia, but under the name of blossom. It is a small plant, which grows in the forest, but only big (large) form had a thick stem, and is either thrown out or cut off from the stem itself, or to grow on a very short stem. These buds open suddenly with a distinct

report. A thick fleshy cylinder, divided into several sections, or 'flower-leaves,' then appears; its colour being black, variegated with spots of peculiar shade, from dark brown to purple."—*Proc. Zool. Acclimat. Soc.* vol. vi. p. 16.

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J. A. G. Campbell, p. 241.

"Are you clever with the blowpipe?"

"Can you fell trees cleverly?"

"Are you a good climber?" and

"Do you smoke cigarettes?"

If these questions were answered in the affirmative, the bridegroom then gave a cigarette to the bride and lighted one himself; they then ran round the mound three times; if the man succeeded in catching the woman the ceremony was completed, and they were declared married, but if the man failed to catch the woman he tried again another day.<sup>1</sup>

Of the same Sakai tribe, Campbell adds that their marriage settlements consisted of saucepans, frying-pans, jungle-knives, hatchets, beads, and blowpipes. The woman, however, gave nothing in return. A man could not have more than one wife.

**Sakai (Orang Tanjong) of Selangor.**—Writing of another tribe in Ulu Langat, the same author tells us that the women of the "Cape Tribe" ("Orang Tanjong") were allowed to have more than one husband, and that one woman who lived at Bandar Kanching formerly had four. These women (he adds) used to seek their own husbands.<sup>2</sup>

### III.—JAKUN.

**Blandas.**—The qualifications required of the Blandas (Kuala Langat) women, at their wedding ceremony, which was similar to that described above, were their ability to hammer tree-bark ("mēnitek t'rap"); to roast or "burn" ("bakar") bananas, sweet potatoes, and yams; and to make betel-leaf wallets ("bujam"). It may also be worth noting that both

<sup>1</sup> J. A. G. Campbell, p. 241. Although this tribe must be classed as Sakai, this particular ceremony is undoubtedly of Malayan origin. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

partly change their names after the birth of their first-born child, whose name they take. Thus, Pa-Bijan, Ma-Bijan, or "Father of Bijan," "Mother of Bijan" were the actual names of a married Blandas couple whose eldest-born child was called Bijan.

**Besisi** Upon one occasion when I inquired of the Besisi in Kuala Langat how a man would address a woman whom he wished to marry, and who was not unwilling to accept him, one of them repeated as a specimen, the following address.<sup>1</sup> It took the form of an imaginary dialogue, which ran as follows:

10     Ans. unwilling to be deceived.  
 11     1. W.     My n<sup>d</sup>. I clearly follow you. However I do not  
 12     2. I am not  
 13     3. He is I think I am the man with whom to rest. I shall  
 14     4.     I feel it warm. A friend whom I clearly follow  
 15     16     He is a faithful friend. I will follow him through any  
 16     17     18     19     20     21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 17     18     19     20     21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 18     19     20     21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 19     20     21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 20     21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 21     22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 22     23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 23     24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 24     25     26     27     28     29     30  
 25     26     27     28     29     30  
 26     27     28     29     30  
 27     28     29     30  
 28     29     30  
 29     30  
 30

Here the man, after pushing the betel-stand towards her, says :

[illegible]

<sup>4</sup> In ordinary cases the main request would be addressed to the girl's parents, as among the Malay themselves. (p. *My Malay*, pp. 364-365)

As regards marriage itself, the existence of a distinctive law is perhaps more than might be expected of this unsophisticated race, yet it not only exists but is recognised as binding, and is, moreover, pretty strictly observed, and it is noticeable that there are in the Besisi dialect special terms for both "husband" and "wife."

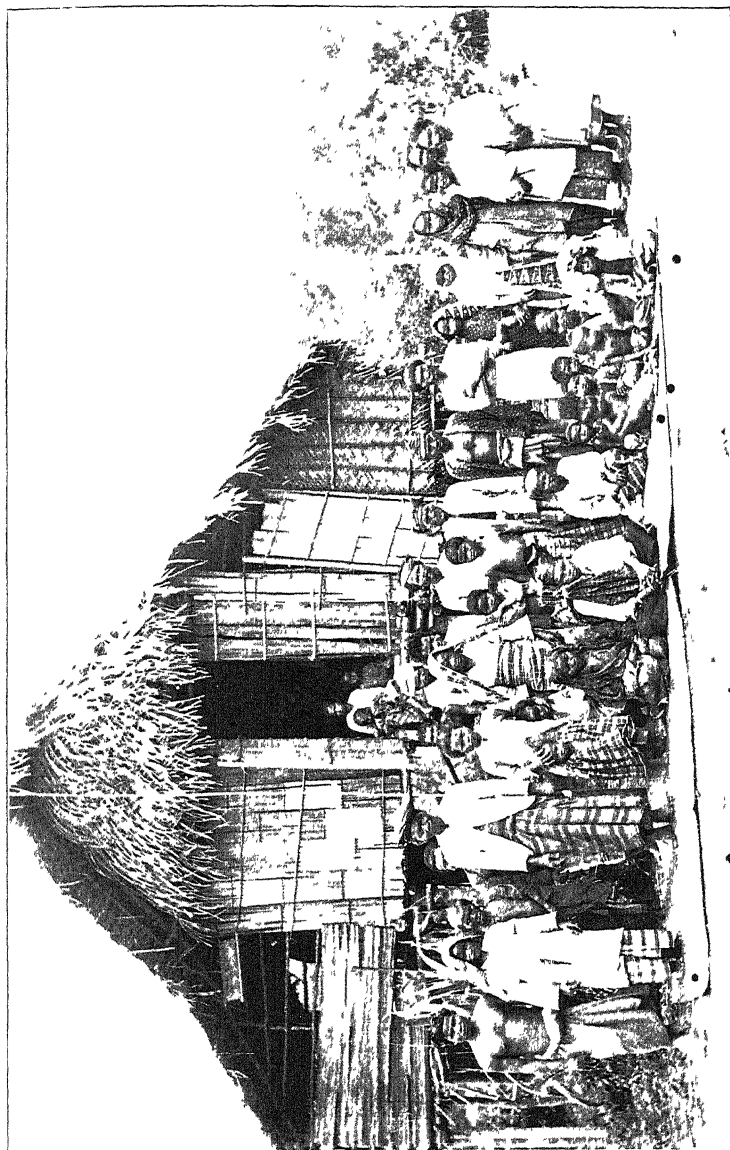
A remarkable fact is that the Besisi commonly have a regular carnival (at the end of the *padi* or rice harvest) when (as they say) they are "allowed to exchange" their wives, a practice which recalls the wedding law of ancient Peru, by which there was established one universal wedding-day annually throughout the land.

The marriage settlements brought by the man consist of such objects as are best calculated to contribute to the satisfaction of the bride and her parents, as, for instance, a string of beads, four cubits ("hasta") of white cloth, a plate and a drinking-cup, and in some cases a ring; but at the same time the husband is expected to provide a hut, cooking-pots, and other necessary articles such as will suffice to enable house-keeping to be started with reasonable comfort.

The usual ceremony (as now practised by the Besisi) is of a very simple description, and is usually performed by the Batin, who is a priestly chief, and, as a Besisi man once put it, "who takes the place of an Imam" (the Malay Mohammedan priest).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The marriage ceremony is performed either by the Batin or the Jinang. The contracting parties stand on each side of him, the girl on his left and the man on his right. He then joins their hands, and after an

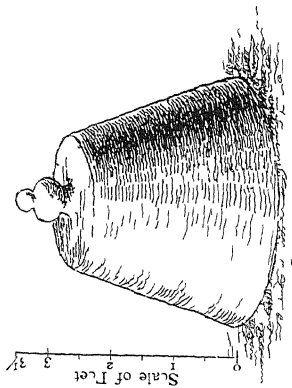
exchange of "sirih" (betel leaf chewed with areca nut) they are pronounced man and wife. A feast is afterwards held, to which all the members of the tribe are invited"—Bellamy, p. 227. Cp. *J I A* III 490.



1100

PARIV OF ABORIGINES, DRESSED (IN NATIVE CLOTHING) FOR A WEDDING  
 Bride and bridegroom seated in front centre. The bridegroom standing next to the bride, and the bride's  
 wife seated next to the bridegroom. Kanitru Panjung, Selangor River.

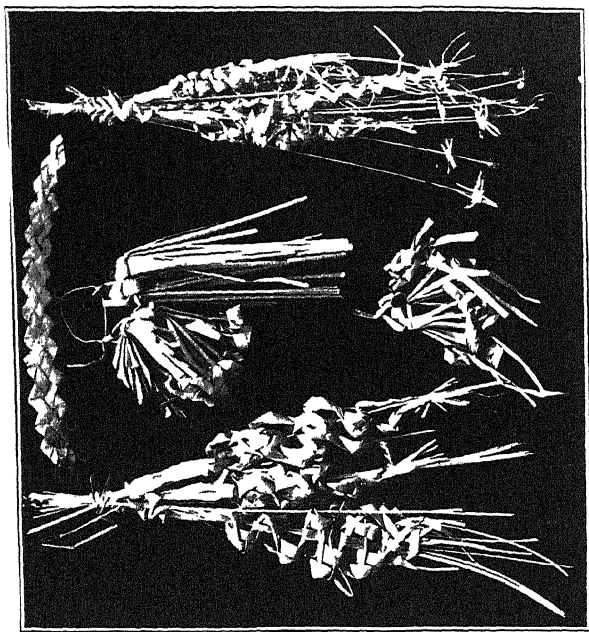




*Mound*

# LARGE BELL SHAPED MOUND OF CLAY USED IN THE MOUND MARRIAGE CEREMONY

This mound was thrown up and shaped as above in my presence by one of the Besti chiefs, at Ayer Irwin, Kurh. It is round at mound of this shape (not in ant heap as alleged) than the Jukun hutegroom formerly had to chase his bride three times.



*Magical collection*

## MAGICAL DECORATIONS OF PITH AND LARD

These are the actual specimens inserted by hosts in the marriage mound. They represent earrings or nooses for charming demons (two bunches in centre) blossom spathe of wild yam (left) and palm (right) and still fruit blossom coconuts and suns (match) the latter set like object is on long stems. At the top is the festoon on plate referred to in text. Similar objects are used at ceremonial dances.

This simpler form of wedding (as practised by the Besisi of Sepang in Selangor) was celebrated in the following manner.—In the first place, the bridegroom would bring to the house of the bride's parents the presents required by custom—say five cubits of white cloth, five quids of betel-leaf, five cigarettes, and a copper ring.

On the bridegroom's arrival all present partook of food, and the bride and bridegroom then ate rice off the same plate. After this meal the gifts were presented to the bride's parents, and the Batin, or one of the minor chiefs of the tribe (*e.g.* the "Penghulu Balei") then inquired: "What about these children of ours? Are we to make them one?" To this the parents replied in the affirmative, and the head of the tribe then gave both bride and bridegroom *a new name*.

The parties might then disperse at leisure.

The really remarkable rite called the "ant-heap" (properly the "hillock" or "mound") ceremony, referred to above by Mr. J. A. G. Campbell as a custom of the Ulu Langat Sakai, appears to be now very nearly obsolete among the Besisi, so far as I could ascertain.

I once had the good fortune, however, to witness it when it was being performed at Ayer Itam (in the Kuala Langat district of Selangor) by some Besisi who had just returned from Batu Pahat (in Johor, where they told me that the old custom was still kept up). I will therefore describe the ceremony that I saw as carefully as possible. I attended the wedding at the invitation of the Besisi themselves, with whom I was on very good terms. Shortly after my arrival at the village a small pit was dug by Penghulu Lempar (of Batu Pahat) in front of the door of a special palm-

leaf building (a Balei or Tribal Hall, built on the plan of the letter T) which had been erected for the occasion. With the earth, or rather clay, thrown up from the pit Penghulu Lempar constructed a mound<sup>1</sup> about the height of a man's waist and in the shape of a truncated cone, surmounted by a small globe and knob, so that it was not unlike a gigantic bell and bell-handle. In the morning, just before the ceremony, I saw Penghulu Lempar decorating it with flowers, and when I asked him where he learnt how to make the mound, he replied that he was quite used to doing so in Johor.<sup>2</sup> The flowers were arranged as follows:—First, round about the mound were planted half a dozen long stems of what Lempar called the "Owl-flower";<sup>3</sup> to these were added several blossoming stems of the wild red "Singapore" rhododendron,<sup>4</sup> and to these were again added some young shoots of fan-palms and other kinds of palms.<sup>5</sup> Into the mound itself Lempar stuck some stems of a common blossoming reed.<sup>6</sup>

To these, the natural products of the jungle, he added a bunch of the following artificial "flowers" manufactured from strips of fan-palm<sup>7</sup> leaf. These were intended to represent the sun;<sup>8</sup> coconuts,<sup>9</sup> nooses or "earrings",<sup>10</sup> the blossom of the wild "seal-

<sup>1</sup> The Besisi told me that the mound was always artificial and always of the same remarkable shape. The reason of its being called an ant-hill is merely that the Malay word ("busut") means a "mound" of any kind (whether natural, e.g. an ant-heap, or artificial), so that the confusion arose easily enough.

The shape of the mound is not necessarily phallic; I have not been able to discover any parallel ceremony.

<sup>2</sup> I mention this because the Batin afterwards told me that the custom was only kept up among the tribes of Ulu Batu Pahat. It seems certain, how-

ever, that the custom is more widely spread. Cp. Maxwell, *J. R. A. S., S. B.*, No. 1, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> "Bunga ponggoh," called by the Langat Malay who accompanied me "satawar hutan," or "wild satawar."

<sup>4</sup> Mal. "kědudok"; Bes. "kodok."

<sup>5</sup> *J. c.* "nibong" and "kěpau."

<sup>6</sup> "Sěndayan," or "senděrayan."

<sup>7</sup> "Kěpau."

<sup>8</sup> Bes. "met are," or "tongkat langit."

<sup>9</sup> Bes. "niyu."

<sup>10</sup> Bes. "subang."

ing-wax" palm,<sup>1</sup> and the blossom and fruit of a remarkable wild tree-nut with boat-shaped sail, called by the Malays the "sail-fruit" or "fill-cup," the latter title being due to an extraordinary property on the part of its seeds, any one of which, if placed in a cup of water, will fill the entire cup with a substance resembling a brown jelly, which is eaten with avidity by the Malays.<sup>2</sup>

I may add that each representation of the "sun" was crowned with a little spike, on which was spitted a blossom stripped from a newly-plucked spray of the wild ("Singapore") rhododendron. This bunch was inserted into the knob-like summit of the mound, and a plait or festoon of the same material, decorated with long streamers, encircled the mound just below the upper rim of the truncated portion.

The preparations were completed by depositing on the flat top of the truncated portion a dish containing two portions of rice and wild betel-leaf<sup>3</sup> and a dish of water, which were to be shared later on between the bride and bridegroom.

About half-past nine the beating of drums at a distance announced the approach of the bridegroom's party. On its arrival the bride (who was staying in the house of the tribal chief or Batin, whose guest I was) was carried outside (on the shoulders of a matron, if I remember rightly), and stationed close to the mound, so as just to leave room for the bridegroom and his supporters to pass. A lengthy catechising of the man (who was coached by the Batin) followed, the questioning being undertaken by the Penghulu Balei (one of the inferior chiefs) on the part of the woman.

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<sup>1</sup> Bes. "chongoi mēri" = Mal. "pinang raja."

<sup>2</sup> Mal. "sālayer," or "kembang sāmangkok."

<sup>3</sup> "Chambai."

*Pengulu Baii* (for the bride). Have you bought plates and cups?  
*Batin* (on behalf of the man). I have.  
*P.* Have you bought pots and pans?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you bought clothing?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you bought a jungle-knife (chopper)?<sup>1</sup>  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you bought a hatchet?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you built a hut?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you made steps for it?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you formed a clearing?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you made a rice-spoon?<sup>1</sup>  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you made a water-bucket?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you planted yams?<sup>2</sup>  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you planted sugar-cane?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you planted rice?  
*B.* I have.  
*P.* Have you planted bananas?

*B.* I have.  
*P.* Do you know how to fell trees?  
*B.* I do.  
*P.* Do you know how to climb for fruit?  
*B.* I do.  
*P.* Do you know how to use the blow-pipe?  
*B.* I do.  
*P.* Do you know how to smoke cigarettes?<sup>3</sup>  
*B.* I do.  
*P.* Do you know how to find turtle-eggs?  
*B.* I do.  
*P.* Is all this true?  
*B.* It is true.  
 I could purchase a hill at Singapore, Malacca, or Penang.  
 I could purchase a hill in Selangor or Perak;  
 How much more then *somebody's* daughter.<sup>4</sup>  
*P.* Is this true, so a tree fall on you?<sup>5</sup>  
*B.* Speak not of *somebody's* daughter! Monkeys of all kinds<sup>6</sup> do I search for and capture;  
 How much more then *somebody's* daughter.

*P.* "Pün!" Sweet potato, "Pün!"  
 Thus we Jakun plant sweet potatoes!  
 "Ratified,"<sup>7</sup> says the *Batin*, say the chiefs of the tribe!  
 "Ratified" [say] both young and old!  
 Round the mound and round again!

At this stage of the proceedings the bridegroom (who was dressed, like the bride, in Malay apparel) was conducted seven times and the bride once round the mound, and they were then stationed side by side, when they were together given rice to eat from the

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* a rice-spoon of wood or coconut shell.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* "have you got a yam-patch?" etc. etc.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase used may also mean, "Can you make" or "have you made cigarettes?"

<sup>4</sup> Lit. a daughter of people (perhaps the wild people or the tribe). But it may equally well mean the daughter of a person, or "somebody's daughter."

<sup>5</sup> The phrase here used ("tempa'

kret") lit. means "fall upon (your) body," *i.e.* "so may (a tree) fall upon you," which is the strongest form of asseveration used by these forest-tribes among whom the terror of falling trees is very real and present, and perhaps more feared than any other danger.

<sup>6</sup> Lit. "chikahs" and "lotongs" (two kinds of monkey).

<sup>7</sup> Lit. "true" (Bes. "hol").

<sup>8</sup> Lit. *Batin*, *Jinang*, *Jukrah* (titles of chiefs).

plate and water from the dish. All parties then adjourned to the "Balei" or tribal "Hall," where a feast was in course of preparation, and where the bride and bridegroom were made to eat and drink from the same dish, and shortly afterwards time compelled me to leave.

I may add, however, that during the entire night before the wedding from dark to dawn the Besisi never ceased beating their drums and playing on their rude bamboo flutes and stringed bamboos ("banjeng").

I may add also that the bride and bridegroom looked little more than children, and that there is no apparent limit of age for marriage among these people.

Before we departed one of the Batins remarked to me that the mound by which we were at the time standing was the emblem of his religion, or (as he put it) the "priest of his tribe."<sup>1</sup> There can, I think, be little doubt as to the meaning of this statement, and given some such sacred emblem, the procession around it would be natural enough. Whether the race or the walk round it was the older institution must remain a moot point, until further evidence on the point is obtainable; most probably the walk is the survival.

With regard to the age at which the Besisi women are married, we are told by Logan that among the Besisi a child of a few years old was not unfrequently betrothed to her intended husband, who took her to his house and brought her up.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The expression employed (in Malay) was "kita-punya Imam," *i.e.* "our priest." The statement was a purely voluntary one, and not in response to any question of mine. In Pahang a fire takes the place of the mound (p. 82, *infra*).

<sup>2</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 270. Logan compares this with the custom of the "Dayaks" near Banjermassin, where betrothal takes place at the age of four or six years. A similar custom occurs in Java.

It is said that a Besisi man will occasionally take to himself two wives, but never more than two; as a matter of fact, however, I do not remember a single case in which a Besisi man had more than one. On the other hand, no Besisi woman might have more than one husband, although cases of polyandry have certainly been recorded among the Sakai of the neighbouring district of Ulu Langat.

Before leaving the Besisi marriage customs it should be recorded that at their great annual carnival or drinking feast ("main jo'oh"), during the rice-harvest, there was (as in some other savage lands<sup>1</sup>) a sort of "game of exchanging wives." This is the same ceremony as that which Logan terms the "Tampoi Feast," a fuller description of which will be given below.<sup>2</sup>

**Mantra.**—In an interesting account of the marriage ceremony as performed by the Mantra, Logan informs us that marriages among the Mantra were not ordinarily made with the haste of the "Tampoi Feast." When a young man was desirous of marrying a girl, he would communicate his wishes to his own father, who communicated in turn with the father of the girl. If the latter agreed to the match, from four to eight silver or copper rings were presented to him, and a day was appointed for the marriage. When it arrived, the bridegroom was conducted by his parents and relatives to the bride's house, where a large feast had been prepared. On entering he paid his respects to the near relations of the bride. If the Batin did not reside at a great distance, he always attended, and presided at the ceremony. Betel-leaf and its usual accompaniments having been placed ready upon a sieve ("nyiru"), the bride took up one of the small

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, even, by latest reports, in Greenland.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 169-170, *infra*.

packets of betel-leaf and presented it to the bridegroom, who presented another to her in return. The father of the bridegroom then addressed him, enjoining him to cherish his wife, to be kind to her, on no account to beat her or behave harshly to her, but, if he should ever be offended by her, to complain to her parents. The father of the bride then laid a similar injunction upon her. The company were then feasted, the bride and bridegroom eating from the same plate, a custom which is common to most of the Indo-Chinese and Malayan races. The bridegroom remained for the night.<sup>1</sup>

It should be added that the teeth of the bride and bridegroom were filed with a stone before the day of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

A form of the mound-ceremony found among the Besisi is also practised by this same tribe, and Borie, in describing it, remarks that when all the

<sup>1</sup> *J. I. A.* p. 323\*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* M. Borie (tr. Bourien), in giving a description of a wedding among the Mantra, informs us that the bride, who was clothed by her companions in her best attire, was conducted to the centre of the assembly, where she took her place close to her future husband, who, bowing, saluted every member of the company, shaking hands with each of them in turn. According to old custom, the three chiefs made speeches upon the obligations of matrimony—not forgetting to enjoin upon the husband that in return for the submission that his wife owes him, he should punctually day by day supply her with betel-leaf to eat and tobacco to smoke. The Juru Krah (one of the three chiefs), who was conducting the marriage, then demanded the pledges of their prospective union, and the bride and bridegroom professing to be unable to comply, addressed themselves to M. Borie, who gave them two handker-

chiefs, which were thankfully accepted. A plate containing small packages of rice wrapped up in banana-leaves then having been presented, the husband offered one to his future wife, who showed herself eager to accept it, and ate the contents; she then in her turn gave some to her husband, and they afterwards both assisted in distributing the remainder among the other members of the assemblage. The Juru Krah having received a ring from the husband, returned it to him, and he then placed it on the finger of the left hand of his future wife. The bride having also received a ring from the Juru Krah, placed it upon the finger of the right hand of her husband; the marriage was then declared complete, and copious plates full of rice with vegetables having been served round, all set to work to satisfy their appetite. M. Borie remarked that the bride and bridegroom still ate from one dish. (Borie (tr. Bourien), pp. 81, 82.)



to members of the tribe, the union was arranged by the parents, and the ceremony consisted simply in the parties eating from the same plate. After partaking of a repast, the relatives of the bridegroom departed, leaving him to pass the night in the bride's house. Next day he carried her home. A small present was sent to the bride's parents previous to the marriage. The Batins and their families would send as much as forty plates ("pinggan") on such occasions, and other persons as much as twenty plates. If the lady had already been married, no ceremony whatever was used. She repaired to the house of her new husband, and installed herself as mistress.<sup>1</sup> Most of the Benua had one wife only, but some had two, and there did not appear to be any rule on the subject.<sup>2</sup> The husband might not beat his wife for any cause whatever.<sup>3</sup>

### No marriage was lawful without the consent of the

tical as to the real existence in his day of the practice described, but in view of all the evidence, it may be taken, I think, as substantially accurate.

<sup>1</sup> Logan here adds that amongst the Berembun tribes the husband either took up his residence in the house of his wife's parents or made one in their clearing.

<sup>2</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 267.

Newbold gives a graphic account of a wedding among the Benua, but unfortunately it is not clear to what tribe he refers. His account is as follows:—

"On occasions of marriages the whole tribe was assembled and an entertainment given, at which large quantities of a fermented liquor, obtained from the fruit of the Tampoi, are discussed by the wedding guests; an address is made by one of the elders to the following effect: 'Listen, all ye that are present, those that were distant are now brought together, those that were separated are now united.'

The young couple then approach each other, join hands, and the sylvan ceremony is concluded. It varies, however, in different tribes. Among some there is a dance, in the midst of which the bride elect darts off, *à la galoche*, into the forest, followed by her innamorato. A chase ensues, during which, should the youth fall down, or return unsuccessful, he is met with the jeers and merriment of the whole party, and the match is declared off. It generally happens, though, that the lady contrives to stumble over the root of some tree friendly to Venus, and falls (fortuitously of course) into the outstretched arms of her pursuer!

"No marriage is lawful without the consent of the parents. The dowry usually given by the man to the bride is a Malay hatchet ('*bélong*?'), a copper ring, an iron or earthen cooking vessel, a chopper or parang, a few cubits of cloth, glass beads, and a pair of armlets; the woman also presents a copper ring to her intended. Polygamy is not

father. A man might not have more than one wife at once. A man who divorced his wife lost the dowry given to her, but if the divorce came from the side of the woman, she was bound to return the dowry she received from the man.<sup>1</sup>

Any married person surprised in adultery might be put to death. But if a woman so surprised could prove that she was seduced, she would not be put to death, but would be sent away by her husband. After divorce the man and woman might marry again with other parties.<sup>2</sup>

A father could not sell his child, but might give him to another, always provided that the child would consent, no matter what its age might be.<sup>3</sup>

If children were left orphans, their nearest relatives would bring them up, unless, with their consent, some other person agreed to do so.<sup>4</sup>

Although the Benua women were generally faithful, adultery appeared to be neither infrequent nor held in sufficient detestation. The Malays asserted that it was not difficult to obtain favours of Benua women, and these latter themselves admitted that husbands sometimes changed their wives, and wives their husbands.<sup>5</sup> Divorce was simply a putting away of the wife.<sup>6</sup>

permitted, but a man can divorce his wife and take another. The form of divorce is that the parties return their copper wedding-rings; the children generally go with the mother."

\*In some tribes it is customary to deck out the bride with the leaves of the Palas-tree, and to cut off a part of her hair, a custom also observed by Malays, and termed "andam" (Newbold, vol. ii. pp. 407, 408. Cp. also vol. i. chap. v., and vol. ii. pp. 394, 395: "Adultery is punishable with death if the parties are caught in the act.")

With the foregoing should be further compared the account given by Vaughan Stevens in *V. B. G. A.* xxiii. p. 833, which does not however add anything of importance.

<sup>1</sup> Favre in *J. I. A.* vol. ii. p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> This is doubtless at the annual "carnival" or "Tampoi Feast," and it is not fair on that account to tax the Benua with infidelity.

<sup>6</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 268.

**Jakun of Johor.**—Logan states that among the Jakun, marriages were ordinarily celebrated about the months of July and August, when fruits were plentiful. The bridegroom frequented for some time the house of his intended, and when he had obtained her consent, he made a formal demand for her hand to her father. A day was then appointed, and preparations made for an entertainment, the scale of which varied according to the means of the two contracting parties, and their rank in the tribe. When the day for the marriage had arrived, the bridegroom repaired to the house of the bride's father, where the whole tribe was already assembled. The dowry to be given by the man to his bride was then delivered ; it must consist at the least of a silver or copper ring, and a few cubits of cloth, and if the man were able to afford it, a pair of bracelets. To these gifts a few other ornaments and articles, *e.g.* furniture for the house of the new family, were added. Sometimes the woman also presented some gifts to her intended husband. The bride was then delivered by her father to the bridegroom, and the solemnity began. Some stated that among some of the tribes there was a dance, in the midst of which the bride elect darted off into the forest, followed by the bridegroom. A chase ensued, during which, should the youth fall down, or return unsuccessful, he was met with the jeers and merriment of the whole party, and the match was declared off. A slightly different ceremony was ascribed to the Benua of Pahang, viz., that during the banquet a large fire was kindled, all the congregation standing as witnesses ; the bride then commenced to run round the fire ; the bridegroom, who was obliged to run in the same direction, following her ; if he succeeded in catching her the marriage was valid,



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if he could not, it was declared off.<sup>1</sup> No marriage was lawful without the father's consent. Conjugal faithfulness was much respected among the Jakun; adultery being punishable by death. It was especially remarkable that among the Jakun, although they were surrounded by Mohammedans and heathen races, all of whom were so much addicted to polygamy, it was not allowed to keep more than one wife, and that Logan met with only one who had two wives, and he was censured and despised by the whole tribe.<sup>2</sup> The only difference, in fact, between this form of monogamy and that practised by Christian nations was that amongst the Benua a man might divorce his wife and take another. The rule was that if the divorce was proposed by the husband, he lost the dowry he had given to the woman; but that if the woman asked to be divorced, she must return the dowry she had received at marriage. The children followed the father or the mother according to their own (the children's) wishes; if, however, they had not yet arrived at the age of reason, they followed the mother.<sup>3</sup>

**Udai.**—The only reference to marriage among the

<sup>1</sup> On this Favre remarks that all the Jakun he questioned on the point declared that they were not at all aware of the practice, so that if the story were true, it must be ascribed to a few tribes only (*J. I. A.* vol. ii. p. 264).

[This conclusion, however, does not necessarily follow from the premises. The Jakun frequently deny the existence of practices which they fear will be laughed at by strangers, and the very Jakun who took part in the mound ceremony had previously denied its existence to me.]

A yet older authority for the Mound ceremony than Favre, is Captain Begbie, who states that the marriage ceremony of the Jakun was (*ante* 1834) as follows:—When a young woman

had allowed a man to pay his addresses to her, the parties proceeded to a *hillock* round which the woman ran three times, pursued by the man; if the latter succeeded in catching her before the termination of the chase, she became his wife, but not otherwise (Begbie, *loc.* pp. 13, 14). It is worth noting that the object round which the chase took place is here accurately described as a hillock and not as an ant-heap.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Begbie, *loc.* pp. 13, 14. Polygamy among the Jakun is not allowed, and is punishable.

<sup>3</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. ii. p. 264. For the treatment of the Jakun women by their husbands, who regard them as mere chattels, but are otherwise not unkind to them, see *Z. f. E.* xxviii. p. 166.

Udai is that made by Newbold, who records that they are said never to intermarry with the Jakun, who accuse them of devouring their own dead and of cohabiting with the beasts of the forest.<sup>1</sup>

#### ORANG LAUT OR SEA-JAKUN.

\* **Orang Laut, S'letar.**—Of the marriage customs of the S'letar tribe we are informed that a mouthful of tobacco and a single "chupak" of rice handed to the bride's mother confirmed the hymeneal tie. The S'letar women intermarried with the Malays, this custom appearing to be not unfrequent; they were also sometimes given to Chinese, and an old woman stated that she had been united to individuals of both nations, at an early period in her life.<sup>2</sup>

**Orang Laut, Sabimba.**—Before marriage the bridegroom prepared a hut of his own to which he carried the bride, on the day of marriage, from the house of the Batin where they were united. Twelve cubits ("hastas") of white cloth, and some betel-leaf and areca-nut were delivered by the bridegroom into the Batin's hands for presentation to the parents of the bride.

The children of brothers might not intermarry, but those of sisters and of a brother and sister might do so. Adultery was punished by a fine of 1000 rattans, seduction of a virgin by compelling the man to marry her and to give the customary present to her parents.<sup>3</sup>

To the foregoing should be added the *déclaration* of the Sabimba that they had no actual ceremonies at marriage; the preparation of a shed, open on all sides, and measuring about 6 ft. × 4 ft. (1.8 m. × 1.2 m.),

<sup>1</sup> Newbold, ii. 381, 382.

<sup>2</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 347\*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 297.

erected over a few branches and leaves strewed on the ground, comprised all the bridegroom's care. The price of a wife was stated to be ten needles, three hanks of thread, sixteen cubits of cloth, and three "reals." The Sabimba women did not intermarry with the Malays, nor would they part with their offspring for any consideration.<sup>1</sup>

**Orang Laut, Beduanda Kallang.**—Previous to marriage the bridegroom was expected to provide himself with a boat of his own. Members of the same family might not intermarry, however remote the degree, though at the same time no doubt the traces of relationship would tend to be soon lost and forgotten. Widowers and widows were not in the habit of marrying again. Polygamy and adultery were both unknown.<sup>2</sup>

**Orang Laut, Muka Kuning.**—As soon as the breasts of a girl were of the size of an areca-nut she was considered marriageable.<sup>3</sup> When a marriage had been agreed upon, the parents of the bridegroom sent to those of the bride 3000 rattans, a piece of cloth, a jacket, and two silver rings. The marriage, which took place at the house of the bride, in presence of the Batin or tribal chief and several guests, consisted in the bride and bridegroom being placed side by side, and made to join hands, while the parents enjoined them to be kind to each other and avoid disputes. A feast followed, at which the newly married pair ate from the same plate or leaf. Singing and dancing to the tambourine ("rēbana") followed. The Batin received as his fee a present of 2000 rattans.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 347\*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 300.

<sup>3</sup> This is also the standard followed by the Malays.

<sup>4</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. pp. 338\*, 339\*.



If a husband was not pleased with his wife, he might return her to her parents, and after the lapse of a month the parties might form other connexions. Polygamy was unknown. The children of brothers might not intermarry.<sup>1</sup>

**Orang Laut, Akik.**—The only remark I have met with in reference to the marriage customs of this particular tribe was to the effect that although a Jakun could take an Akik woman to wife, the Akiks were not permitted to marry with the Jakun females.<sup>2</sup>

The remainder of this account of the wedding ceremonies of the Orang Laut is taken from Vaughan-Stevens, and is of general value only, no names of tribes or localities being given:—

At marriage the son commonly undertook to build a boat for himself, unless, as was usual, he already possessed one. But both he and his wife could live in the boat of either's parents, whenever his assistance and that of his wife might be required. Marriage took place at a very early age, at fifteen or sixteen years, but now since there are fewer women available, it takes place later.<sup>3</sup>

The customs relating to the choice of wives among the Orang Laut are very similar to those of the E. Semang (Pangan), Sakai, and Jakun.<sup>4</sup> The men of one community could only take a wife from another community (not their own), in the days when they lived upon the sea.<sup>5</sup> If the two communities were at feud, and the young people had no opportunity of making a choice, matches were effected by capture, and both the women and their dowry taken by force.<sup>6</sup> But these organised attacks never take place in the interior of the country, since the Eastern Semang is unrestricted in his choice of a spouse, and the Sakai is bound by his totemistic (*see*) code.<sup>7</sup> Communal marriage, in which the woman is free to all the men of the community, or its milder form, family-marriage, in which the woman becomes the spouse of all her husband's brothers, did not occur; and both polyandry and polygamy were equally unknown.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. I. A.* vol. i. p. 339\*.

<sup>2</sup> Newbold, ii. 413, 414.

<sup>3</sup> Bartels in *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 174.

<sup>4</sup> As the customs of the three races are very different, this sweeping statement seems meaningless and indefensible.

<sup>5</sup> On p. 175, Vaughan-Stevens explains that by exogamy he means marriage within the different branches of the same race, not intermarriage with strangers or foreigners. Thus in the

case of four communities of the Orang Laut of which A, B, and C, were of pure blood, and D a mixed tribe of Orang Laut and Jakuns, the first tribe A, could take wives from B or C, B could take wives from A or C, and C from B or A, but none of them could take a wife from the mixed tribe D.

<sup>6</sup> Vaughan-Stevens in *Z. f. E.* xxviii. p. 174.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* V. ante, p. 62.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

Orang Laut children belong not to the father but to the mother. Thus, supposing a woman belonging to a community A, marries a man belonging to a community B, the children would belong to A, and at the father's death would be taken by the mother to her original home.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this may be the reason (remarks Bartels) why the Orang Laut man cares so little about his children and treats both mother and children so badly.<sup>2</sup> Vaughan-Stevens continues, that when he said to some of the Orang Laut, "The fact appears to be that you can be sure who the mother is, but not who the father may be," they laughed and agreed with him.<sup>3</sup>

Among the Orang Laut the exact value of the present to be made to the bride's parents depends partly upon the bride's qualities and partly upon the circumstance whether she was desired in marriage by one or more suitors. In the case of captives being taken as wives, this present was naturally omitted.<sup>4</sup>

*Apropos* of the so-called "ant-hill" ceremony, Vaughan-Stevens remarks that in spite of many inquiries he was unable to substantiate it except in a restricted area near Malacca, where he believes it was "introduced by half-breeds."<sup>5</sup>

Vaughan-Stevens goes on to say that it was the custom for the youths of the tribe, at the wedding-feast, to engage in various games, the object of which was to excite the bridegroom to pursue his bride, but that though it was certainly unnecessary for him to catch her, he was mercilessly bantered if he failed of his purpose. This was, however, by no means a necessary ceremony, and did not take place at every wedding.<sup>6</sup>

The position of the women among the Orang Laut is pitiable, being much worse than among the other tribes.<sup>7</sup> Vaughan-Stevens says, "I have often seen an Orang Laut man take all the fish and roots which had been collected by his family in the course of the day, and silently devour the whole, leaving nothing but the heads and refuse for his wife and children to feed on." And when by any chance an Orang Laut is compelled to traffic either with the Sakai, Jakun, or Malays, these latter not unfrequently insist upon his giving a share of the food which he gets from them to his wife and children. The Orang Laut are, in fact, the lowest of all the aboriginal tribes,<sup>8</sup> and are the only tribe of which the men, upon all occasions, eat before their womenfolk are allowed to do so. Among other tribes the men on special occasions eat before the women, but that is because somebody has to look after the food, and not because they are considered too much beneath their husband for them to be allowed to eat with him.<sup>9</sup>

Even when Vaughan-Stevens gave food to Orang Laut women they never dared to eat it when their husband was present, and so long as another man, even if he were not their husband, was present, they would always retire from his presence before eating it or giving any of it to their children.<sup>10</sup>

The Orang Laut were originally divided into families, recognising a special locality or district as their home, and since they invariably lived in scattered parties in their boats, they described themselves as belonging to such localities. Marriage

<sup>1</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 175.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* The custom here described appears to be analogous to the "Adat Perpatih" of the Malays of Rembau and Nanning.

<sup>4</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 176.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* This scepticism as to the prevalence of the custom is, I believe, quite unnecessary (for the reasons before given, and others).

<sup>6</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 176.

<sup>7</sup> This character of brutality so lightly

ascribed to the Orang Laut, I believe to be quite unmerited, and mainly due to the fact of their being wilder and shyer than the other races in the Peninsula, and hence apparently more stupid and brutal.

<sup>8</sup> It is not true that they are the only tribe of which the men eat before their women-folk, and even if it were, it may be doubted whether the inference here deduced can be justly drawn from it.

<sup>9</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 167.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*

did not affect the situation, and the invariable rule held good that men and women belonging to the same locality might not marry, but that each must seek a spouse in another locality. This rule, however, like many others, fell into disuse when the domain of the Orang Laut became restricted to its present area. But nevertheless the spouse is still chosen from as distant a locality as possible.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Orang Laut monogamy was the rule, the only exception being the so-called "Levirate." For whenever the man's brother died, the former frequently supported the widow, on the ground that he took her as a kind of second wife. This at least is said to have been formerly the custom, until the women discovered later that as there were more men than women, they could very easily obtain a husband of their own.<sup>2</sup>

When the widow was taken over by the brother of her first husband, the children were allowed to choose, should they be old enough to do so, between remaining with their mother, and leaving her establishment.<sup>3</sup>

Vaughan-Stevens asserts that the custom of [? mother-in-law] avoidance does not exist among the Orang Laut, nor were any names "taboo," though they had heard of the custom.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, *l.c.* p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Z. f. E.* xxviii. 177.

*Ibid.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### BURIAL CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

THIS is a most intricate subject, and the best hope of an adequate solution seems to lie in observing the divergent mental attitudes of the three wild races when confronted with the death of a member of their small community.

The Negrito, for instance, exhibits little dread of the ghosts of the deceased, from which the Sakai, on the other hand, flee far aloof in terror. The Jakun again certainly display a dread of the ghost, but in their case the result of this most powerful motive, which inspires all similar burial customs, takes the form of a religious care for the dead man's spirit.

Hence it is not surprising to find that, though the Semang now employ a simple form of interment, their more honourable (and therefore older?) practice was to expose the dead in trees, whereas the Sakai simply leave the body to rot, and even desert standing crops.

The Jakun devote their first efforts to making things comfortable for the spirit of the deceased, and do not as a rule desert the place until after their month of mourning has expired.

Of the various rites observed by these tribes there are several that will prove of interest to students of

ethnology. Among these are mere desertion of the corpse, as practised by the Sakai; the exposure of dead wizards in trees,<sup>1</sup> attributed to the Semang; platform burial in a modified form, as practised by some of the Sakai of Selangor; the lighting of a fire on or near the grave, as is done both by the Sakai and most of the Jakun; the scrupulous solicitude shown by the Jakun for the deceased's spirit, which is provided with a furnished hut to live in, and provisions to feed upon, (as in the interesting burial-customs of the Besisi),<sup>2</sup> and even with a trench full of water on which to paddle its canoe (as in the case of the Jakun chief recorded by Hervey); and finally, the practice of fixing a bamboo in the grave in communication with the mouth of the corpse for the purpose of feeding it, a custom of which we have among the Jakun of Berembun a mere survival.

To this we may add the use of the "burial bamboo" ascribed to the Semang by Vaughan-Stevens, which is said to be deposited in the grave to serve as credentials for the dead man's spirit to show when it comes before the universal Judge; and the atrocious custom attributed to the Udai, which is explained by a Pangan tradition that I collected in Kelantan.

<sup>1</sup> The Andamanese expose the body facing east on a small stage of sticks and boughs 8-12 ft. above the ground, usually in the fork of a tree; this is thought more complimentary, as involving more labour.—*Man's And.* pp. 76-77.

<sup>2</sup> The soul-hut of the Selangor Besisi is strongly reminiscent of the "three-cornered hut," which is erected by the side of the grave in Bali. At the burial of a commoner in Bali, we are told that when the body has been committed to the ground, there "is fixed in the ground by the side of the grave a bamboo, on the top of which there is a sort of three-

cornered hut of lattice-work, in which offerings of small value, chiefly rice and flowers and fruit, are deposited immediately after the funeral, and subsequently at certain intervals. These offerings are for the purpose of propitiating the Butas (the demoniacal beings who infest places of burial especially), lest they should attack the soul of the deceased. The grave is then surrounded with a fence or hedge. Those who are buried in this way cannot enter heaven; they then assume all sorts of shapes" (especially that of the half-wild dogs which are numerous in Bali).—*Misc. Papers relating to Indo-China*, second series, vol. ii. p. 138.

## I.—SEMANG.

**Pangan.**—The Pangan or Eastern Semang of Kelantan informed me that the bodies of the lay members of the tribe were buried in the ground (in a way which I shall presently describe), but that the bodies of their great magicians (whom they called "B'lians") were deposited in trees in order that they might be able to fly over the head of the fearful figure which they believe blocks the narrow way that leads to the Junglemen's Paradise. They further informed me that the dead body of one of these magicians had actually been deposited in a tree on the banks of the Kelantan river (above S. Sam), but the place described already lay a considerable distance to the rear of our expedition, and it was not then possible to reascend the river in order to investigate. I may add that the Pangan, like the Sakai, are entreated at death to "think of their departed ancestors alone and forget their living friends."

**Kedah Semang.**—I will now describe the grave of a Semang which may be taken as fairly typical, and of which I was able personally to obtain the full particulars. At Siong, in Kedah, I persuaded the Penglima or head of the Semang tribe, with a great deal of difficulty, to allow me to purchase the bones of a relative of his own who had been buried in the jungle not far from the settlement. The Penglima conducted one of the local Malays and myself to the site of the grave, which was in the depths of the jungle, and which we could never have found without assistance.

A couple of stout bamboo poles which had been used to form the bier by means of which the remains had been borne to the spot, lay crossed above the grave, which was partially defended by a low fence of

prickly palm-leaves and branches. The grave was that of one "P'landok" or "Mouse-deer," who was said to have died about a year before, leaving behind him a son called "Padang" or "Flatland," whom I met in the settlement. We opened the grave together, and found it to measure about three feet deep by about five feet in length. There was nothing left of the body but the skeleton, which lay upon the right side in a huddled-up position, with the head and knees turned towards the right, and legs doubled back,<sup>1</sup> so as to bring them within the limits of the grave.

Three coconut-shells, which had been used for holding small portions of rice, were still to be seen, one of them being just behind the head, and the other two at each side of the body. At the foot was a coconut-shell still partially filled with water. The body rested on a mat which covered a roughly-made floor or platform of sticks,<sup>2</sup> and had evidently been wrapped up in a red cloth ("sarong"), pieces of which were still here and there visible. A row of short stakes had been driven diagonally into one side of the grave-pit, the lower ends meeting the side of the pit about half-way down, a foot (30 cm.) above the body, and the upper ones reaching to the upper edge of the opposite side of the pit. The roofing to the grave thus formed had been covered with palm-leaves (*bětam*) laid longitudinally, and the whole arrangement formed a sort of screen which would keep the earth from falling on the body when the grave was being covered in.

An infant child of the dead man ("Mouse-deer") had been buried in a tiny grave a short distance

<sup>1</sup> As among the Andamanese, who are buried with "knees brought up to the chin, and fists to the shoulders." —*Man's And.* pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> This platform had no doubt, with the two bamboo poles referred to above, formed the bier on which the remains of the deceased had been carried to the grave.

away from that of "Mouse-deer" himself, but nothing was to be seen there at the time of my visit beyond a slight depression in the surface of the ground showing where the burial had taken place.

These were said to have been the only deaths that had occurred since this tribe had arrived in the Siong district, where they had lived, they said, for a couple of years.

**Perak Semang.**—Mr. L. Wray writes me, that in the Piah Valley he once camped in a large clearing containing a crop of Indian corn, nearly ripe, besides vegetables, etc. This clearing had been recently abandoned in consequence of two deaths. The graves were in the clearing and the houses were still standing. Lower down the valley Mr. F. Lawder, about four years previously, had seen a case in which the house had been shut up with the dead body in it. The skull and some of the bones from this house are now in the Perak Museum. In the same valley Mr. Wray saw another huge clearing with growing rice abandoned because of a death. In this instance, however, he did not see the grave.

The following account, which generally speaking agrees with what I have observed myself, is taken from Vaughan-Stevens.<sup>1</sup> It gives, however, the only account I have met with of the burial bamboo, which is one of the important subjects connected with these tribes still awaiting further investigation.

On the occasion of a death the Pangan silently fetch the timbers required for the grave, and betake themselves to any suitable place in the jungle. Here they dig a grave with straight sides, deep enough for a man to stand in up to the hips, and then return to fetch the corpse. The Sna-hut meanwhile examines the corpse and gives it the burial bamboo or "pénitah" ("peneetor"), a bamboo written over with signs, which is to serve as testimony on the other side of the grave to the behaviour of the man in the present life.

The burial bamboo is inserted in the girdle of the deceased, with the node uppermost, the hollow pointing downwards; the deceased lying meanwhile upon the ground. A slight bier is then fashioned out of a few bamboo poles, which are bound together with rattan or other creepers. The corpse is laid upon it,

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan-Stevens, in. 119-122.



We are told, however, by Hale that the Sakai of Perak were in the habit of burying along with a man his tobacco wallet, bead necklace, or timber-box. Similarly her comb, necklace, or bracelets were buried along with a woman. The house in which the death had taken place was invariably burnt down and the settlement deserted, even at the risk of the loss of standing crops.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, two Sakai graves in Batang Padang (Perak) described by Wray were raised like Malay ones, and well taken care of, and on them were the remains of fruit, flowers, Indian corn, coconut-shells, bottle-gourds, roots, etc., which had been placed there probably as offerings to the dead.<sup>2</sup>

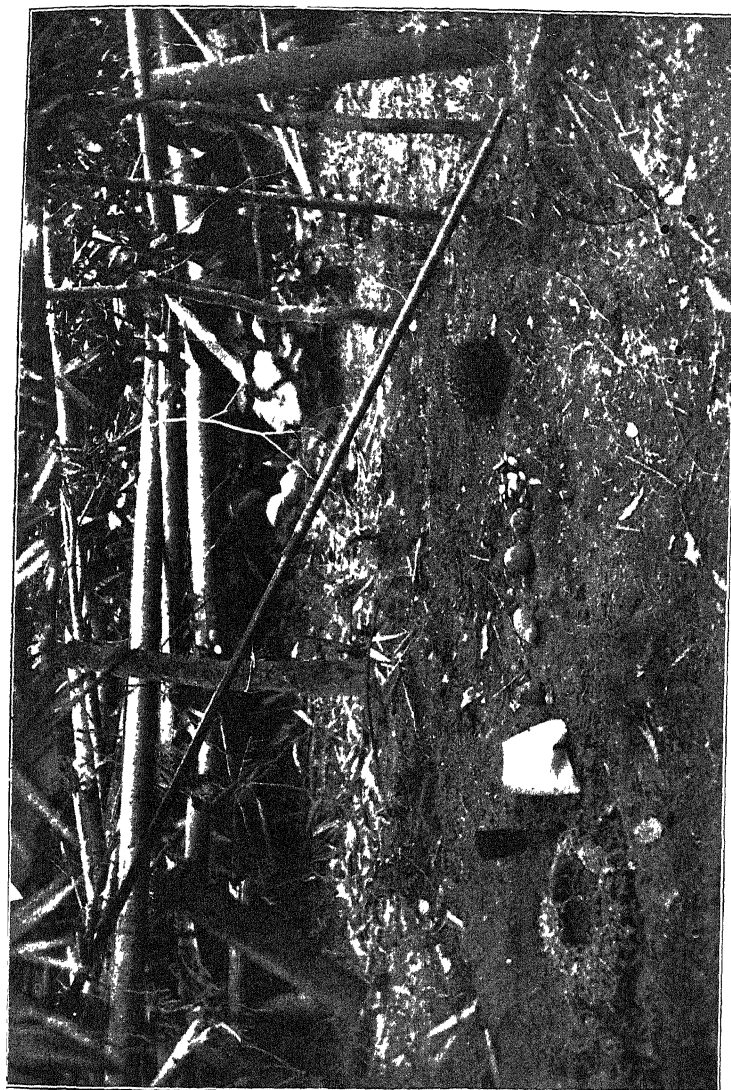
This last description, though puzzling, is of no small interest, for although the graves described were undoubtedly in the heart of the Sakai country, the evident care with which they were tended sounds more like the work of tribes under Jakun influence, who like other branches of the Malayan race are most particular in this respect. From all we know of the genuine Sakai, they have so intense a terror of the ghosts of the deceased that they burn down the house, and even sometimes the village, in which a death has taken place, and never return to it. Can it be that deaths from epidemic diseases inspire this terror among the Sakai, whilst those from old age or other milder causes do not? I confess that I see no satisfactory explanation.

To the foregoing account Mr. Wray now adds, that at Kuala Dipang, in Kinta, he saw the grave of Toh Sang, the chief of the South Kinta and a portion

<sup>1</sup> Hale, p. 291. In a MS. note Clifford says that the medicine-men ("hā-lā") of the U. Kerbat Sakai are exposed after death in huts, when they

are thought to disappear and become tigers. For others there is no ceremony.

<sup>2</sup> L. Wray in *J. R. A. S., S. B.*, No. 21, p. 125.



Current

# SAKAI MAN'S GRAVE (S PERAK),

showing blow pipe, wallet, adze-head, fruit, wreath, and other objects deposited thereon, for the benefit of the deceased's soul.



Continued

SAKAI WOMAN'S GRAVE (S. PI 1 AK.)  
 showing combs, necklace, ear rolls, and other objects of attire, with fruit and musical instruments deposited on behalf of the deceased's soul.  
*Vol. II, p. 97*

of the Batang Padang Sakai. It was a raised grave of the Malayan type, and was built up with earth thrown up within his house, for which purpose the flooring had been removed, and the walls continued down to the ground. His widow and children were living in a house near by, and it was they who took Mr. Wray to see the grave.

The account given by Vaughan-Stevens contains (as usual) no localities; it runs as follows —

The old form of Sakai ("Blandas") grave is very peculiar, but has now become rare. In places where the Sakai have mixed with Malays and Chinese the old methods of burial have ceased with the loss of the old customs. The grave is made well-sided, as it is then (says Vaughan Stevens) found easier to dig (*see*). The corpse is washed by friends or relations and dressed in clean clothes. The site for the grave is chosen by the wife or nearest relation and one of the subordinate chiefs (Penglima); it is always distant from another grave, road, river, or house. The digging of the grave, for which no payment is made, is performed by two or more persons, old tools being used in preference to modern (Chinese) ones. The corpse is laid out with the hands close to the hips, and bands or strips of bark or cane are bound round the arms, wrists, and ankles. The eyes are closed, but the lower jaw is not bandaged, and the body having been rolled up in a mat (a modern substitute for bark cloth), is firmly bound round in three places. A new wrapper of tree bark (large enough to surround the corpse) is then rolled round it and tied again with three bands of cane or tree-fibre and slung from a carrying pole, the ends of which are borne by two men upon their shoulders. Only one woman (the wife) may follow, but as many men as like may do so. At the grave the bark wrapper is removed, and the corpse laid upon its back in the grave with the head towards the west. There is no "consecrating" ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

I omit the rest of Vaughan-Stevens' description of the Sakai grave, as it possesses no further interest from the Sakai point of view. The form of grave described is a mere copy of a common Arabic grave-type which has been borrowed by the Mohammedan Malays, and adopted from them in turn by the Sakai without any interesting variations to recommend it. Those who wish to see it, however, will find it under the

<sup>1</sup> Vaughan Stevens, II 136, 137. The length of the grave is fixed by measurement, the standard being a man's length plus a span or "jengkal" (reckoning from the tip of the middle

finger to that of the outstretched thumb). The standard for the depth of the grave is the hip-joint of the digger [Among Malays it is usually taken to be the ear of the digger — W S.]